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EDITORIAL

VIEWED IN THE STRICTLY TECHNICAL SENSE "ANABAPTIST THEOLOGY" IS A CONTRADICTION in terms. A systematic, philosophically grounded theological structure was not only unknown to the Brethren of the sixteenth century, but in a very real sense rejected by them. The theologians of the Catholic and Protestant "great churches" were among their bitterest enemies and traducers—why should they not come to believe that theology was the enemy of the truth, a human invention based on man's reason, a great obstacle to finding the will of God. This spirit of despising theology has come down through the centuries and is still characteristic of many Mennonites. Some modernizing Mennonites have even turned it into an asset for their position by using it as a ground for condemning orthodox theology. Nevertheless, the early Anabaptists had a theology of their own in the truest sense of the term. They held clearcut and consistent convictions regarding God, man, sin, salvation, the church, Christian living, etc., and they maintained a virile and effective testimony to these convictions. They also delivered a keen critique of theological positions at variance with the truth of God as they believed it, and possessed a deep insight into the relation between reason, revelation, and life commitment.

What has just been said is well illustrated by the 1571 letter of Peter Walpot to a certain Polish Socinian, Simon Ronemberg, which constitutes the major part of the article by Robert Friedmann entitled "Reason and Obedience" in this issue. Representatives of the Socinians had visited the Hutterites with a view to a possible union but had stumbled at certain points of theological difference. As Dr. Friedmann points out in his commentary, Walpot's letter constitutes a complete challenge to the Socinians, striking boldly at a central theological crux, the reason-revelation problem. [One might put the antithesis, theology versus life, but this would be abusing the concept of theology.] Walpot's great assertion is that to be "saved" means to put one's whole life at the disposal of God in full discipleship. This theology with a depth that goes far beyond mere intellectual concepts and requires the whole man is deceptively simple. It seems so simple that some have discounted it altogether as "theology." But it is the typical complex intellectualizing theology of the theologians that is in its ultimate character easy theology, for it so often substitutes reason for obedience. This is also a major reason for its rejection by the Anabaptists, who demanded obedience.

IN CONTRAST TO THE PETER WALPOT LETTER WHICH EMPHASIZES THE NON-THEOLOGICAL character of the Anabaptist faith, Don Smucker's article, "The Triumph of Anabaptist-Mennonite Theology—The Re-discovery of Biblical Theology in Paradox," presents an interpretation of the whole of this faith in terms which have considerable reference to the modern theological situation. Smucker's comprehensive analysis represents the first approach in English to a systematic Mennonite theology based on an understanding and whole-hearted acceptance of the historic Anabaptist position. As such it has very great value in addition to its character as an excellent summary of the Anabaptist faith in the terms of Biblical theology. Modern Mennonites no longer live in the original Anabaptist world, hence they must seek to state their historic heritage of faith in terms which are relevant to the modern age in which they live. Such an attempt is not without its risks, particularly if it should lead to a substitution of intellectualization for the obedience of faith. For this reason the REVIEW is particularly happy to be able to publish the Walpot letter and the Smucker article in the same issue. However the risks can be overcome and a sound and useful result achieved. We look forward with much expectation to the further unfolding of a historically oriented Mennonite theology along the lines which Don Smucker has indicated. Too long have modern Mennonites fed at the theological table of Lutherans, Calvinists, Arminians, Pietists, Liberals, or Fundamentalists, to the obscuring of their own great heritage of faith. There is an Anabaptist-Mennonite contribution to be made to Christian theology. Let us in our time see that it is made.

THE FIRST HALF OF THE FINAL CHAPTER IN THE SERIES OF STUDIES OF EXTINCT OHIO Mennonite churches by John Umble appears in this issue. The second half of the Ashland County story will cover the immigrant settlement direct from the German Palatinate, which failed to prosper.

THE VALUABLE ANNUAL STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF ATTENDANCE OF MENNONITE SCHOOLS and colleges prepared by Professor Silas Hertzler appears in this issue for 1944-45.

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

Vol. XIX No. 1

THE THEOLOGICAL TRIUMPH OF THE EARLY ANABAPTIST-MENNONITES

The Re-discovery of Biblical Theology in Paradox

DONOVAN E. SMUCKER

Introduction

What was the supreme triumph of the original Anabaptists? What was the glorious heritage carried forth by the best Mennonite interpreters of this discovery?

In answering these queries the sympathetic sociologist points to mutual aid brotherhood, thus concluding that the supreme achievement was in the realm of social ethics. Or, again an answer comes from the student of the peace principle and its historical development. This interpreter would say that the prime contribution of original Mennonitism was Christian nonresistance. Still others, both in and out of the Mennonite community, would place the center of gravity at the point of nonconformity and withdrawal, implying a kind of Protestant monasticism.[1] Then, there is the theory that this great movement of 400 years ago (whatever it set out to be) really was the seed-plot of the free, democratic societies which have developed into the past two centuries.[2] Finally, *and unquestionably*

[1] Robert L. Calhoun and Roland H. Bainton, "Christian Conscience and the State," *Social Action* (Oct. 15, 1940) VII, 28.

[2] See the analysis of W. W. Sweet and Rufus M. Jones as quoted on pp. 304-306 of Guy F. Hershberger's *War, Peace and Nonresistance,* (Scottdale, 1944).

most common, is the conception of original Anabaptism as dangerous heresy and corrupting treason, fatal alike to both church and state.[3] At various times since the inception of the movement 400 years ago Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed theologians have followed this line of interpretation; although, to be sure, it is relatively uncommon in the twentieth century.

In each case these interpreters have focused their analysis on part of the truth. "The Anabaptist Vision," to use Harold Bender's excellent phrase, certainly did include a mutual aid brotherhood; it did make much of Christian nonresistance; it did have a doctrine of nonconformity (though it was not the ridiculous caricature often suggested by destructive critics) : moreover, Anabaptism did make a great contribution to the development of free, voluntaristic institutions; and the charges of "heresy" are true insofar as they suggest a sincere criticism of conventional orthodoxy, Roman, Lutheran and Calvinist (or theological liberalism, ancient or modern), a criticism in the light of what was considered a more perfect orthodoxy, non-heretical and non-treasonable.

To discover the nature of this orthodoxy, it is necessary to ask once again the question with which this paper started: *What was the supreme triumph of the original Anabaptist-Mennonite declaration?* The answer is this: *These great Christians re-discovered the theology of the Bible!*

Because the Bible is the written Word of God, because it is a comprehensive revelation of God to man, because it is a Divine message from God *through* man, this central triumph includes all other partial, specific or secondary comments which may be made in describing the "Anabaptist Vision." Note that I have used the word, "re-discovered." This suggests that their triumph was, in essence, nothing new. The following sentence of Harold Bender's,[4] supported by at least seven other historians of Anabaptism, defines the issue at this point:

" . . . Anabaptism is the culmination of the Reformation, the ful-

[3] C. Henry Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites,* (Berne, Ind., 1941), 21.

[4] *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* April 1944, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, p. 74. I consider this essay, "The Anabaptist Vision," the most impressive and convincing survey now available. Moreover, I am in fundamental agreement with all of its central assumptions. What I am declaring in this paper might be thought of as an extended footnote on "The Anabaptist Vision," an elaboration of what was both implicit and explicit in its approach. What is new here, perhaps, is the suggestion as to the *form* of this "Vision"; the *mold* and *structure* of the "Vision"; the *source* of the "Vision"; and, above all, the theological *dimensions* of the "Vision," especially in the many-sided aspects of these dimensions.

filment of the original vision of Luther and Zwingli, *and thus makes it a consistent evangelical Protestantism seeking to recreate without compromise the original New Testament church, the vision of Christ and the Apostles.*" (Italics mine)

Which is to say that the Anabaptists re-discovered the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints."[5] (Jude 3) It is this faith which is recorded systematically and comprehensively in the Holy Scriptures.

Yet, how delicate has been that triumph! Again and again the evangelical churches in general and the Mennonites in particular have lost that magnificent theology of the Bible, thus illustrating Reinhold Niebuhr's dictum that every great spiritual achievement is subject to perils—and deadly ones—at all times.

But there is still a more important reason why the theology of the Bible is desperately difficult to maintain, namely, the *paradoxical* nature of all Biblical truth.[6] A paradox unites seeming contradictions in a single strand of truth.

One may further ask: Just what is a paradox? Sockman whimsically remarks that a paradox is a truth standing on its head to attract attention. And, moreover, by its seeming contradictions a paradox challenges sluggish minds, by its apparent absurdity it provokes further study, and by touching the nerve of surprise it stimulates fresh insights. Thus Jesus Christ (and therefore the Bible) did not outrage reason; He outran it. This is the perfect mode

[5] Modern liberalism finds this claim of absolute finality an impossible stumbling-block. I am indebted to no less a repentant liberal than Charles Clayton Morrison for this splendid exposition of the point: "One of the hardest things for modern man to accept is the orthodox Christian claim that, once and for all, the ultimate meaning of the world and of life emerged in history and was apprehended in such a manner that it became the criterion by which all history and human culture must evermore be judged. This claim is foolishness to modern liberalism which has taught us to believe that we stand at the peak of a long evolutionary development and from this eminence are able to judge the past. But Christian orthodoxy takes a different view. It says that the norm, the criterion, did once appear and was apprehended in history. All history rests under the judgment of this criterion—and we also rest under its judgment. The assumption that Christianity is true, that it has always been true, and that its truth will never be outgrown is the only assumption upon which the first steps toward an understanding of the Christian faith can be taken. For the modern mind the alternative to this assumption is not that Christianity is false but that it is intermediate. It is one thing at one time, and another at another. It is the product of the culture changes from age to age. Christianity changes with it, sloughing off successively one element after another until there remains nothing but the name to link it with the original." *Christian Century,* (March 17, 1943) LX, 322.

[6] My original introduction to this peculiar nature of Biblical truth came from a reading of Ralph W. Sockman's *The Paradoxes of Jesus* (New York, 1939). I consider much of Sockman's theology quite unconvincing; but this book is of great significance.

of truth arising from God's infinite wisdom over against the finite wisdom of man.[7]

Consider some of the outstanding paradoxes* of Scripture:

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake will find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Matthew 16:25, 26 (Christians find by losing.)

"Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but, if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." John 12:24 (Christians live by dying.)

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Psalm 8:2 (Strength in weakness.)

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:21 (Overcoming evil with its opposite.)

"Love your enemies." Matthew 5:44 (The enemy is treated like a non-enemy.)

"He that is called in the Lord a servant (slave) is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant (slave)." I Cor. 7:22 (Freedom in bondage.)

"As having nothing and yet possessing all things." II Cor. 6:10 (Gain in loss.)

"I know thy poverty but thou art rich." Rev. 2:9 (Riches in poverty.)

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:4 (Status by humble innocence.)

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am come not to destroy, but to fulfill." Matthew 5:17 (Great reverence for the law yet initiating a legal revolution.)

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound

[7] No doubt further study should be undertaken to compare the thesis of this paper with the conception of paradox held by the neo-orthodox theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Soren Kierkegaard and Karl Barth. With them the emphasis centers around the seventh chapter of Romans ("For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Verse 19) Reinhold Niebuhr declares that the basic paradox of human existence is man's involvement in finiteness and yet his transcendence over it: *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, I, 175 (New York, 1941). This extremely difficult conception affirms, moreover, a definition of sin "in terms of a violation of the good within freedom itself." I am convinced that Niebuhr's challenge to every synthesis of Christian truth, including the Mennonite synthesis, must be soberly faced. On the other hand, Niebuhr's virtual denial of the possibility of being a Christian destroys the great Biblical paradox of justification and sanctification.

*I am quite willing to admit that the early Mennonites never explicitly used the term "Paradox" to describe their approach to the Bible—at least I have never discovered the word in my reading of Mennonite history. But I believe that it was implicit in their approach to the Bible precisely because the Bible is cast in this mold. Seb. Franck, B. Hubmaier, H. Denck.

the things which are mighty." I Cor. 1:27 (Christian "foolishness" overcoming worldly sophistication; crucified love overcoming eternal might.)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1 (Jesus of Nazareth and Christ the Messiah are one: the Divine-human nature of our Lord.)

"And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me." Matthew 10:38 (The Christ who comforts with the cross and rests men with a yoke.)

"But many that are first shall be last; and the last first." Mark 10:31 (Reversal of position in the Kingdom.)

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3 (A spiritual birth *and* a physical birth.)

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." I John 5:7 (The stupendous paradoxical mystery of the Trinity: Three persons in one Deity.)

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1 (God the uncaused First Cause; creation *ex nihilo* by the *uncaused* First Cause.)

Surely these many texts from representative sections of the Bible lend powerful support to the belief that Biblical truth has this paradoxical dimension. By no means does this exhaust the possibilities of quotation.[8] Now let us see how the early Mennonites used this fundamental form of Scripture revelation in building their theology.

Specific Doctrines

First of all, consider the Mennonite view of Scripture itself. In a notable chapter[9] of his *Mennonites in Europe,* John Horsch proves conclusively that the Brethren started with a strictly evangelical view of Scripture and, what is most important, that Hans Denck and other adherents to a view of spiritualizing the Bible in order to emphasize the "inner" rather than the written Word, were not representative. From the large list of writers emphasizing this more literal view, a list including Conrad Grebel, Michael Sattler, Pilgram Marpeck and Dirck Philips, there is this digest from Menno Simons:[10]

My dear brethren, I for myself confess I would rather die than to believe and teach to my brethren a single word concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, at variance with the express testimony of God's Word,

[8] For example, see the notable list of paradoxes in II Cor. 6:4-10: or, place the parables of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46) and the Labourers and the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16) side by side, as suggested by Niebuhr in *Beyond Tragedy,* pp. 250-251, (New York, 1937.)

[9] John Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe* (Scottdale, 1942) 350-356.

[10] *Ibid.,* 355-356.

as it is so clearly given through the mouth of prophets, evangelists and apostles.

But that Gellius appeals to Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen and Augustine, my reply is, first, If these writers can support their teachings with the Word and command of God, we will admit that they are right. If not, then it is a doctrine of men and accursed according to the Scriptures.

If anyone under the canopy of heaven can show us from the Scriptures that Jesus Christ, the Son of Almighty God, the eternal wisdom and truth, whom alone we acknowledge as the lawgiver and teacher of the New Testament, has commanded one word to that effect, or that His holy apostles have taught or practiced the like, then there is no need of an attempt to compel us by tyranny and torture. Only show us God's Word and our matter is settled. For we seek nothing else (God who is omniscient knows) than in our weakness to walk in obedience according to the divine ordinances, word and will, for which we poor persecuted people are shamefully reviled, banished, robbed and slain in many countries.

Thus, the inspiration, infallibility, unity and authority of the Bible was fervently affirmed. Yet, they maintained the basic distinction between the old and new covenants; and they did this without denying the inspiration of the Old Testament,[11] a brilliant feat which modern liberalism could not accomplish.

Protestant Liberalism took quite another approach.[12] It denied the inspiration, infallibility, unity and authority of the Bible. All this was done in the name of truth, the hard facts of modern scholarship. But, particularly in the case of those in the social gospel tradition, destructive criticism was made in the name of the exalted ethics of the New Testament as over against the Old Testament. Certainly this has been one of the fundamental contributing causes to the confusion, complacency and compromise of Protestantism; and, what is most crucial, the theology of the Bible has been lost!

Protestant Fundamentalism took still another approach. In the name of a kind of dead level unity it discarded the new ethics of the new covenant. The Sermon on the Mount was destroyed or postponed or both. It is one of the real ironies of Biblical controversy that conservatives took such amazing liberties with the rather obvious meaning of the Sermon on the Mount. The Scofield Bible, something of a textbook for American Bible institutes, relegated

[11] The most impressive collection of quotations from early Mennonites on their view of the relation between the Old and New Testaments is John Horsch's, *The Principle of Nonresistance As Held by the Mennonite Church* (Scottdale, 1939).

[12] See Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Modern Use of the Bible* (New York 1924) and William Clayton Bower, *The Living Bible* (New York, 1936). "Abiding truths in transient settings" is the key to these books.

the radical love ethic to the future kingdom; the Roman Catholics consider this teaching a counsel of perfection for vocational pacifists like monastics and contemplatives—but not a commandment; Luther attempted to isolate it in one side of the dualism he saw between grace and nature: the more absolute love teaching was limited to individual relationships with the state likewise supreme in the fallen order; Reinhold Niebuhr and most neo-orthodox theologians live under the "tension" of Matthew 5-6-7 as the "impossible possibility." Moreover, the neo-orthodox school, while consciously seeking the theology of the Bible, uses the conception of myth in relation to many mountain peaks of Scriptural narrative.

Mennonite literalism made all these detours impossible. Today the church needs a return to the healthy literalism of the early Anabaptists. Notice the *"healthy."* Not a letter-centered, Spirit-killing literalism. The charge of this type of literalism has been hurled at Mennonites for the past 400 years; no doubt it is one of the real perils of this approach. On the other hand, one is impressed with this rejoinder of a Swiss Brethren leader in Bern in 1538: "Is that which Christ has spoken the dead letter?" Pilgram Marpeck showed that, according to Christ's own statement, His words are "Spirit and life." Moreover, he said that the words of Paul, "the letter killeth" refer to "the letter of the law which had the purpose to kill." Yet, the Swiss Brethren always admitted that one can have the letter without the Spirit.

The evidence is increasingly clear that the pendulum is swinging back toward Biblical theology in American Protestant circles. The intellectual blows of Niebuhr, Pauck, and a host of brilliant anti-liberals most of whom are ex-liberals; the sheer facts concerning demonic evil in history itself; the helplessness of modern education—all these forces have helped move the pendulum in the direction of the Word of God, the Holy Writ. Yet, this new orthodoxy has still failed to come to terms with its real Achilles heel: *a symbolic view of Biblical truth.* Water Lippmann, in his sorrowful confession of doubt, *A Preface to Morals* (written in 1929), puts his finger on the very crux of the issue between liberalism and orthodoxy, namely, the question of whether the central truths of Christian faith are literal truths or symbolic. Says Lippmann,[13] "Once you weaken the belief that the central facts taught by the churches

[13] Walter Lippman, *A Preface to Morals* (New York, 1929) 35.

are facts in the most literal absolute sense, the disintegration of the popular religion takes place." Precisely the same point is made by Santayana in his *Reason and Religion*[14] where he insists that the principal defect of liberal religion is the loss of the central certainties because of adjustments to science and Biblical criticism. Thus after seventy-five years of criticism, there are thousands who view the Scriptures as "somewhat archaic, somewhat questionable, although very touching and moving; a quaint medley of poetry, rhetoric, fable, exhortation and insight into human struggle."[15] All this destroys a characteristic of evangelical Christianity in its most dynamic phase: "God has spoken to us; God has spoken directly through the Hebrew nation and through Jesus Christ and this experience is recorded through the Power of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Bible." With this affirmation, then, goes the essentially paradoxical distinction between the Old and New Testaments (Christ is "the mediator of the better covenant")[16] without denying the inspiration of the original Testament. This belongs with the theology of the Bible because the view thus believed was squarely based on the *internal* evidence of the Bible itself.[17]

Consider another Biblical paradox which the early church fathers re-discovered: the relation between faith and works.

The Roman church destroyed this paradox by its program of works: the recurrent "miracle" of the Mass, indulgences, use of holy water and holy oil, the supposed efficacy of relics, the idolatrous use of images and so on.[18] Luther utterly destroyed this Roman heresy by the great rallying cry of the Reformation, "Justification by faith!" Yet, this tended to be a one-way passage which broke the Biblical paradox which I shall indicate in just a moment.

In contrast with this preoccupation with either faith or works,

[14] For an elaboration of this view and a general survey of chastened liberalism see David E. Roberts and H. P. Van Dusen (ed.) *Liberal Theology, An Appraisal* (New York, 1942). Sixteen well known liberal scholars reveal how far they have moved from popular superficial liberalism to symbolic truth.

[15] Lippmann, *op. cit.*, 36.

[16] Hebrews 8:6.

[17] For an interesting example of detailed Scriptural authority relating to the authority of the Bible and the distinction between the Testaments see Thieleman J. van Braght, *The Bloody Theater or Martyr's Mirror* (Scottdale, 1938) pp. 381-383; see also C. Henry Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites*, 29.

[18] For a succinct Mennonite critique of Romanism see Harold S. Bender, *Mennonite Origins in Europe* (Akron, 1942), 3-7.

Menno Simons, in a representative Mennonite statement, declared the following:[19]

> . . . If we would enter into life we must keep the commandments, Matthew 19:17, Mark 10:19, John 15:10, that in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avail; but the keeping of the commandments of God, I Cor. 7:19, and that the love of God is that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous, I John 5:3. Therefore, we are called by the preachers heaven-stormers and work-saints; and that we want to be saved by our own merits; although we always have confessed, and by the grace of God, ever will, that we cannot be saved by any other means, of anything in heaven nor in earth other than the merits, intercession, death, and blood of Christ, as has been amply demonstrated above, John 14:3, Acts 4:12, Phil. 2:10.

Here, then, is the logic of this Biblical paradox as stated by Menno: (1) One is saved by the blood of Christ (justification by faith); (2) the saved person will obey God's moral commandments (*Nachfolge Christi*); (3) he who obeys these commandments will thus do good works as a fruit of faith. Or, again, You are justified and saved by your faith in Christ the Redeemer; but, if you do not have good works, *ipso facto* you do not have faith, hence there can be no practical separation of these two great necessities, even though faith is prior in place and efficacy. A much happier word than "works" might be obedience or discipleship or following, all suggesting the *suffering* cross-preaching and cross-bearing follower to whom crucified love is the permanent form which God's love must take in a fallen world.

A still further summary of the various positions might be made along the following lines, broadly speaking: the Calvinists looked upward with fear and trembling to worship God's transcendent majesty; Wesley and the Pietists, reacting against an overly stern and transcendent faith, looked *inward* for sweet experience with the grace of God; the Mennonites looked upward to see God's transcendent majesty, they looked inward for the indwelling, power-giving Holy Spirit, but they also looked *outward* to discipleship, obedience and martyrdom.[20]

This, I believe was paradoxical in the original Biblical sense: ". . . shew me thy faith without thy works and I will shew thee my faith by my works." James 2:18. Hence the belief that ethics can

[19] *The Complete Works of Menno Simon* (Elkhart, 1871) p. 371, Vol. II.

[20] Robert Friedmann's essay, "The Anabaptist Genius and Its Influence on Mennonites Today" in *Proceedings of the first Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems* (North Newton, 1942), 20-25, is extremely clarifying on this issue.

be objective despite the constant and terrifyingly dangerous perils of legalism which denies God's grace, and of pharisaism which denies the chastened humility needed because of the fact of God's grace, is justified. The perils and risks of objective ethics must be accepted, first because this paradox about faith and works is so clearly Scriptural, and second, because the alternatives appear to be cynicism, license or obscurantism.

This leads naturally to the third paradox: The individual and the social Gospel.

True to the Bible, Mennonite theology started with Christ's command to Nicodemus on the fundamental necessity for individual regeneration, "Ye must be born again." This is the starting point and, for that matter, the continuous center of gravity for all Christian preaching and teaching. But, if we stop there the paradox of the Gospel is destroyed through the development of a smug, exaggerated individualism. Individual regeneration is the *root* of the Gospel; service and testimony to others is the *fruit* of the Gospel. Not either-or; but both-and maintained in proper relationship and perspective.

Menno speaks with real passion on this subject. The Christians, he wrote[21]

> . . . exercise charity as much as they have ability; they suffer no one to be a beggar among them; they distribute the necessity of the saints, receive the miserable, take the stranger into their houses, console the afflicted, assist the needy, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, do not turn their faces from the poor, do not despise their own suffering members —their own flesh.

And then Menno makes a scathing denunciation of hypocrisy among those who profess but do not practice Christ's Gospel:[22]

> O, ministers, ministers, where is the power of the Gospel which you preach? Where is the signification of the Supper which you administer? Where is the fruit of the Spirit you have received? And the righteousness of your faith which you can paint and present so beautifully before poor, ignorant people? Is not all hypocrisy that you preach and would pretend and maintain? Are you not ashamed of your easy-going gospel and worthless preaching and fruitless breaking-of-bread, you who in so many years have not gathered sufficient strength from your gospel, teaching, and sacraments, that you have been able to preach your suf-

[21] See my essay, "Mennonite Service Projects in Time of War and Peace" in the *Proceedings of the First Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems* (North Newton, 1942), 67-74, from which these quotations were drawn and in which issues of the social gospel are analyzed.

[22] *Ibid.*, 68-69.

fering, miserable members from the streets, notwithstanding the Scripture plainly teaches and says, 'whoso has this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' Also Moses, 'There shall be no beggars among you.' I John 3:17; Deut. 15:8.

Indeed, the early Mennonite fathers made a daring emphasis on Christian brotherhood, an emphasis drawn directly from the very heart of the Bible. That brotherhood, be it noted, was first and foremost *a brotherhood of the reborn,* thus separating it from many vague, broad and misty conceptions of brotherhood suggested in our day. Hence, the Christian society is first built inside the Christian community: here is an intimate and permanent fellowship unknown to the world at large with many glorious demonstrations of mutual[23] aid, co-operative action and neighborly trust and helpfulness. The concern for others starts inside the brotherhood. Superficially, this may appear narrow selfishness. But, from this base of primitive Christian sharing of burdens among the saints stream forth the healing rays of service and evangelism.

Without any question the greatest modern recovery[24] among the leading Mennonite branches has been the passion to bring Jesus Christ to others through preaching, teaching and healing (or service). "And Jesus went about all Galilee, *teaching* in their synagogues, and *preaching* the Gospel of the Kingdom, and *healing* all manner of sickness among the people" (Matthew 4:23). This is proclaiming the Word, explaining the Word, illustrating the Word; redemption of the mind, redemption of the soul, redemption of the body. No doubt the missionary enterprise represents the most perfect blending of all these dimensions. Paradoxically enough, a new emphasis on Mennonite community life has arisen coincident with the missionary and philanthropic work. Some see this as a reaction against going forth to reach others for Christ. While this may be

[23] J. Winfield Fretz's two articles in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* July, 1939, and October, 1940, his pamphlet, *Mennonite Colonization* (Akron 1944), along with a large number of essays in various Mennonite publications have brought overwhelming evidence to reveal the genuine mutual aid tradition of the Mennonites and its soundness in Biblical and patristic sources. The most convincing and balanced evaluation of this new revival of an old emphasis is Guy Hershberger's monumental *War, Peace, and Nonresistance* (Scottdale, 1944) 288-293, as well as the sections on migrations and relief, 136-151, and the critique of the modern social gospel of Protestant liberalism, 202-230.

[24] See Edmund George Kaufman, *The Development of the Missionary and Philanthropic Interest Among the Mennonites of North America* (Berne, 1931), especially the section, "The Sect Cycle and the Non-Missionary Mennonite Mind," 33-45.

true in some cases it need not be thus. The stronger the local Christian community the more comprehensive can be its spiritual concern for others in "Judea and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth."

What is the relation between service to others (relief, medicine, refugee aid, etc.) and evangelism?[25] The service program, in itself, never saves anyone in the highest Biblical meaning of the term. But, it can either prepare the way for actual salvation of the individual, or nurture salvation once it has taken place. Moreover, for nonresistant people there is a special obligation to bind up the wounds of the suffering as a sincere alternative to military service.

Summarizing, there is indeed a paradoxical relation between preaching "Ye must be born again" with the new role of this reborn individual in the Christian brotherhood, and the collective acts of mercy by the brotherhood which heal yet still require specific preaching and teaching before they can redeem. From the brotherhood goes the redeemed individual to another needy individual who comes back to the society of the redeemed then goes out again to the world-at-large with collective deeds and specific personal work, then back to the brotherhood, linking all with the Triune God, source of all power.

Another supreme paradox of the Bible re-discovered by the Mennonites was the peculiar relation between pessimism and optimism.

As Reinhold Niebuhr points[26] out, Luther reacted vehemently and uncompromisingly against the more optimistic moralism of Catholic scholasticism. So terrifically did man fall in the Garden of Eden that the image of God is virtually obscured permanently. Thus, Luther develops an almost impossible defeatism and despair in connection with any very basic moral achievement—and this, even *after* salvation. While Niebuhr is more optimistic he is also profoundly influenced by this despair. At any rate, the paradox of the true Biblical position is broken by this one-sided correction of the Scholastics.

On the other hand is the optimism which has ruled supreme among Western nations, including both the Christian and the sec-

[25] See *Sword and Trumpet*, XII, 153-170 (July, 1944) (Broadway, Va.) for a conservative Mennonite exposition of "Byways of Social Service" and the "Theology of the Social Gospel" by J. Ward Shank and M. J. Brunk, respectively.

[26] Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, 160-161.

ular groups. Back of it was the belief in Progress. In the Romanes Lecture at Oxford University in 1920, Dean Inge delivered the most brilliant attack on this doctrine which has come to my attention. Said the "gloomy Dean":[27] "The belief in Progress, not as an ideal but as an indisputable fact, not as a task for humanity, but as a law of nature, has been the working faith of the West for about a hundred and fifty years. . . . But it was only in the 18th century that Western Europe began to dream of an approaching millennium without miracle, to be gradually ushered in under the auspices of a faculty which was called Reason." America was the special inheritor of this doctrine; the quick triumphs of this nation enhanced its prestige. Up until the first World War the optimism was more naïve and breezy. Newell Dwight Hillis, for example, uttered this lyrical outburst 40 years ago: "Laws are becoming more just, rulers more humane; music is becoming sweeter and books wiser; homes are happier, and the individual heart becoming at once more just and more gentle."

The second World War, the naked political power of the dictators, and general spiritual chaos, have shaken this doctrine to its foundations. Liberals too numerous to mention have abandoned it. On the other hand, this doctrine is still essentially intact in the high places of liberalism, both secular and Protestant. Harry Emerson Fosdick is a case in point. In his latest book, *A Great Time to Be Alive,*[28] he definitely repudiates the old-fashioned breezy optimism of the Newell Dwight Hillis variety. Yet, the whole eschatological element of the Gospel is still missing. Clearly present are the cornerstones of liberal theology: a plea for a gradual coming of the Kingdom, for a final triumph *in* history, for a willingness to see that Christianity is down-to-earth common sense, that there is no *a priori* reason why organized society cannot be totally conquered for Christ through wise political action. It is a noble, man-to-God struggle pictured by Fosdick; yet, since this moralism stresses Christianity as common sense it cannot explain why the world is still the world, still unconverted, still hostile to Christ. Alas, this is sincere, skillful but patently un-Biblical exhortation by America's leading modernist. Here, too, the Biblical paradox is broken.

[27] *Romanes Lecture, Decennial Issue,* (London, 1920) 3 and 7. See also H. Emil Brunner, *The Theology of Crisis* (New York 1930); Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion* (London, 1936).

[28] (Harper 1944) See especially p. 19.

Now note the amazing paradox of the Anabaptist-Mennonite brethren. Starting with a very basic pessimism they launched what Robert Friedmann has called[29] "the most efficient revival of early Christianity in history." For a time in the 16th century it promised to sweep all Europe before it; without ruthless suppression it might have done so.

First, what was the pessimism? It had two prongs, one individual, one social. Like all true Christian anthropology it started with the fact of original sin in relation to individuals, and hence, came to the utter impossibility of doing anything with a person until he was a child of God—reborn through the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. The carnal man, the natural man, the unregenerate man, was to be loved and ministered unto with decency and Christian charity. But, in that condition of sin, he is hopeless "raw material" for large scale action. Salvation thus had a note of desperate, urgent necessity as the prerequisite to moral change and progress. The second prong was social—and this is the stumblingblock for almost all modern social thought. It was, in the larger social sense, the impossibility of *building* a Kingdom of God. To be sure, the Kingdom (in one of the supreme paradoxes of the Bible) had a present meaning: it could be entered at once through redemption wrought by Christ Jesus. But, in its totality, the Kingdom is in the future, coming catastrophically as a "thief in the night." Its coming is not in history; it is beyond history.[30] Genuine Biblicism cannot believe in the goddess of Reason, the inherent goodness of man, or his perfectibility through evolution since the doctrine of Progress is only the sociological equivalent of the biological dogma of Darwin and his followers.

What, then, was the basis for the revival of the Anabaptists? What was the hope, the optimism back of this great spiritual movement? It was a tremendous outpouring of faith based on a fresh Biblical re-discovery of Jesus Christ as the power of God unto salvation. Jesus Christ was the same today, yesterday, and forever. Jesus Christ calls now to all who will believe, repent and follow. Jesus Christ gives power to the individual to overcome the world. Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Church. The Church is the uncor-

[29] Robert Friedmann, *op. cit.*, 22.

[30] Of course, both post-millennialist and pre-millennialist would disagree. The original Mennonite position was unquestionably that of Amillennialism—no intermediate Kingdom.

rupted remnant[31] called out from the doomed majority; Almighty God is never without witnesses no matter how low the world may sink. Salvation is free, discipleship is costly, unrepentant rebellion is even more costly. Hence, there is no other time than *now,* no other Saviour than Christ. No mechanical device, human mediator, or half-commitment will help. Yes, come, take your cross, and follow the Christ of Calvary. This direct, immediate compelling Christ of the Gospel gave them their optimism or, to put it more Scripturally, their blessed hope. The ground had been cut from all idolatrous pretensions of both church and State. Primitive Christianity had returned to the earth.

The Anabaptists preached this, they lived this burning revelation of God's truth; and from this came a very fundamental emphasis upon holiness[32] of living—in one sense a thoroughgoing optimism that God's grace in an obedient, repentant heart is stronger than the unholy triumvirate of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Yet, *in one of those great Biblical paradoxes they never taught sinless perfection,* a definite snare and delusion under which all Wesleyan holiness movements have operated. Zwingli, for example, charged the Swiss Brethren with the perfectionist doctrine of entire eradication, but further discussion in 1538 between the Brethren and Zwinglians resulted in rather basic agreement on rejecting perfectionism. John Horsch has compiled a number of impressive quotations to clinch this point:[33]

Heinrich Hottinger of Zollikon, near Zurich, in a letter dated August 19, 1925, petitioned the Council of Zurich 'not to believe every liar who slanders me and others. For some time a report has been spread that some of us (the Swiss Brethren) teach that one may live without sin. And now it has been asserted that I have taught that to commit murder, adultery or theft is not sin (to the believer). Thus I am being slandered. . . . Martin Weniger said in the disputation of Zofingen: 'In me personally there is nothing good. I am unable of myself even to think of anything that is good, but I am, as others, flesh and blood and subject to

31 Biblically speaking, the doctrine of the remnant is very important for Mennonite doctrine. It has deep roots in Old Testament (I S. 1:9; 10:22; I Kings 19:18; Jer. 23:3) where its Messiah of the Remnant becomes the Christ of the church in the New Testament; and its Suffering Servant of Jehovah becomes the crucified Saviour. It unites the Bible, illuminates and enhances Biblical eschatology, gives real hope to a New Testament minority in the midst of social chaos. See John Wick Bowman, *The Intention of Jesus* (Philadelphia, 1943) for a suggestive presentation of this Biblical mountain peak.

32 Harold S. Bender and John Horsch, *Menno Simons' Life and Writings,* (Scottdale, 1936), 52.

33 John Horsch, *op. cit.,* 376.

temptation. But that I should let these reign, I answer, No. Therefore, God must give me grace to overcome.' . . . In the disputation at Bern, in 1538, the Brethren stated that they 'never taught that they could not sin or were without sin.' . . . Andreas Castelberger, having been accused of trespassing certain ordinances of the Council of Zurich, protested his innocence of the charges made, but added: 'Before God I am among the greatest of sinners.'

Note, once again, in summary a supreme Biblical paradox. *The Anabaptists taught a doctrine of holiness, denying defeatism and pessimism; they did* NOT *teach sinless perfection, thus denying unjustified optimism; they did not identify the Kingdom with a gradual moral leavening of society, thus denying the optimism of Progress; they gave the Kingdom a present meaning with the benediction of God Himself, thus affirming limited but real possibilities for the remnant; they taught the visible, corporeal Second Advent of Christ without destroying the efficacy of the First Advent or Incarnation at Bethlehem.* All these apparent contradictions are united in the Biblical paradox, *par excellence,* the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, comprehended in a mood of what might be called pessimistic optimism.

In many respects the most complete paradox for a nonresistant person was that of the love of God and the wrath of God.

Conventional orthodoxy has its center of gravity in God's wrath, culminating in threats of hell-fire and damnation. The paradox is broken by portraying only one side of God's nature. Reacting against this, conventional liberalism brings a highly sentimental picture of God's love, denying judgment and hell, concentrating on mercy, forgiveness, and a broad type of Divine sympathy for the frailties of mankind. Needless to say, the paradox of God's nature is swallowed up by this sugar-coated theological pill.

In the theology of the Bible we *are* to root our testimony of nonresistance in God's nature as love. As Matthew 5:44 puts it, "Love your enemies, and pray for them which persecute you; *that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven.*" No true Biblicist can drive that precious teaching from a central place in the Christian life. What ghastly travail and tribulation, what fiendish methods of murder, overtake the world, what a spectacular carnival of sin comes from the loveless desert of modern civilization. Building on the unchanging moral law of the Ten Commandments, the

New Testament from Matthew to Revelation reveals the primacy of love. As Guy Hershberger has written so brilliantly:[34]

> But the New Testament way is to aim at love, not justice. In aiming at justice the result is frequently a selfish struggle for power, position or wealth. In aiming at love, however, the result is often justice as well as love. But even if this result does not follow, the Christian must continue to love anyway, for according to the teaching of Christ His disciples should be willing to suffer injustice rather than to forsake the way of love.

Back of this Biblical teaching is the criticism by which the nonresistance of the Sermon on the Mount is separated from current forms of pacifism, nonviolent direct action of the Gandhian variety and, of course, war itself. All represent, in varying degrees, willingness to compromise with love in order to use coercion in the struggle for justice. The refusal of modern pacifism to concede this Biblical critique is its No. 1 blind-spot, though, to be sure, there are interpreters of Gandhian nonviolence such as K. Schridharani[35] who very frankly admit this element of compulsive force in their strategy.

On the other hand, most modern pacifists—and I admit the exceptions to this generalization—would take a more absolutist position in regard to two other great issues: the nature of the State and the ultimate nature of God. There is a paradoxical aspect to the Mennonite teaching on the wrongness of compromising with coercion in any form and their willingness to take a generally submissive attitude toward government despite a sharp view of nonresistance leading to conscientious objection. This paradox they would insist roots in the Bible: nonresistance is the ethical platform of the redeemed Christian whose Kingdom is not of this world.[36] The State is to maintain order in the sub-Christian fallen order of evil through the use of coercion.[37] The modern pacifist would consider this an unduly high estimate of obligation to the State and yet, curiously enough, an unduly low estimate of the nature of the State in the light of its alleged *potential* for Christianizing the social order. Clearly it is quite paradoxical to view the State as ordained of God

[34] G. F. Hershberger, *op. cit.*, 49.

[35] *War Without Violence* (New York, 1939) and *My India, My America* (New York, 1941).

[36] John 18:36.

[37] Romans 13:3, 4; I Peter 2:14. See further Appendix I, "The Scriptures Speak" and Appendix II, "Some Difficult Scriptures," as well as the chapters on the Old and New Testaments in Hershberger's *War, Peace, and Nonresistance.*

Himself (thus destroying all suggestion of anarchism) yet refuse to administer any of the State's coercive functions with police and military implications. Secondary functions of a general welfare type are acceptable, though the Law of Limits laid down in Luke 20:25 may be put into operation at any time if Caesar insists on trespassing on God's domain in faith, morals, home and church.

The second issue between nonresistants and liberals, especially liberal pacifists, is the nature of God Himself in reference to ultimate issues of justice. The Bible teaches that *ultimately* genuine justice enters into the human situation. But, justice through punishment is specifically a function of God as taught in Romans 12:19, "Avenge not yourselves but give place to wrath (i. e., stand aside and allow God's wrath to have its way) for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord." Then immediately there follows one of the supreme peace texts of the Bible, "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good." Unable to see the paradoxical nature of God, some would say the God of the Beatitudes cannot also be the God of Romans 12:19. Yet both of these elements are there in regard to the future. Jesus Christ converted the thief on the cross through an outgoing love which was not withdrawn even on a cheap instrument of capital punishment. The constancy of God's love was thus revealed in this "death-bed" confession. In contrast, however, the New Testament answer for the finally unrepentant sinner is very dark indeed: eternal punishment is the answer. The supreme teaching on obligation for the unfortunates of society is the Parable of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25; yet this Parable, so crucial for the social gospel, contains the clearest teaching on everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46). Clearly, as Dean Inge once suggested, the logic is this: Since God is just, and since justice is not always done on earth, there is a future life in which it is well with the righteous and ill with the wicked. Hence, another towering paradox in the love of God and the wrath (or holiness) of God. God *is* love (I John 4:8) but His is a righteous love; relative justice is carried out on earth by the State, ultimate justice is in the hands of God alone; love is the supreme obligation of the child of God; justice is to be done insofar as it is consistent with love for there is no genuine justice without love; the

State as an instrument of God is to be given *limited* but real obedience from the child of God; repentance can reach God's love at any time; unrepentance at the Last Judgment creates a permanently painful estrangement from Almighty God. Yes, God is love; God is wrath.

The final paradox is the supreme problem of the Christian life: How to be in the world but not of the world.

Characteristically on one side of the paradox is modern, compromised Christianity whose greatest scandal is a paralyzing worldliness which has made it not a Voice of the Living God but an echo of the crowd. Never was the plight of the sensitive modern man put more succinctly than in that famous article in *Fortune* magazine:[38] "We are asked to turn to the church for our enlightenment but when we do so we find the voice of the church today is not inspired. The voice of the church today is the echo of our own voice. . . . When we consult the church we hear only what we ourselves have said. And the result of this experience is disillusionment."

On the other hand, there is a brittle, self-centered Christianity which is neither in the world nor of the world. This is a moss-covered isolationism to whom the Great Commission is unknown, or, if known, is unheeded. One must say quite frankly that Mennonites are under the constant peril of this corruption because they have literally experienced the cutting edge of a hostile world. As Rufus Jones once said,[39] "It can be safely said that no other movement for spiritual freedom in the history of the church has such an enormous martyrology." It is wholly understandable that a martyred people would exercise some caution about contact with the world. But when conditions of tolerance and freedom are earned through this martyrdom, then the original missionary activity must be restored.

The original Mennonite answer captured the heart of the Gospel paradox. On the one hand was a radical, almost disturbing emphasis on nonconformity[40] with the world. (". . . not *of* the

[38] January, 1940.

[39] Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion,* 392.

[40] Cornelius Krahn, "The Historiography of the Mennonites in the Netherlands," *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* VIII, 220, (October, 1944) declares, "We have seen that the Dutch Mennonites have been most consistent in establishing a church 'without spot or wrinkle.' They practiced nonconformity 'to the world' more rigidly than any other Mennonite Church."

world.") On the other hand, there was a missionary calling which was most impassioned. Listen to Menno's description of itinerant evangelism in the best tradition of the Apostle Paul, the pre-eminent missionary of the church for all time:

> I seek and desire from my heart nothing . . . but that the glorious name, the divine will and the praise of our Lord Jesus Christ may be made known throughout the world. To this end we preach as much as opportunity and possibility affords, both in daytime and by night, in houses and in fields, in forest and wildernesses, in this land and abroad, in prison and in bonds, in water, fire and the scaffold, on the gallows, and upon the wheel, before lords and princes, orally and by writing at the risk of possessions and life, as we have done these many years without ceasing.[41]

One would have to search far and wide to find a more eloquent and fearless missionary testimony than that.

Thus the Christian is to live in the world, look it right in the eye, yet not accept the standards of the world. And what is the world? It is the unchristian aspect of the community and, in compromised churches, it is the unchristian aspect of the church, enigmatic though that may be. The church derives its authority from Almighty God as revealed in the Incarnate Word and the written Word: the world listens to the voice of man and shares the confusing babble of voices which it hears.

In this paradoxical relationship the Christian is to do the unexpected while following the changeless precepts of the Lord. The world expects the vicious circle of evil to continue unbroken; it expects unceasing attempts to drive out Satan with Satan. The Christian, on the other hand, goes into the world to overcome evil with good. (This is what I mean by the unexpected.)

Only effectiveness in the Christian life presupposes that this great paradox is maintained: nonconformity to the world and its sub-Christian standards while carrying on a zealous program of missionary activities at all times and places.

Conclusion

I have presented six of the great Biblical paradoxes re-discovered by the Anabaptists and carried forward by the Mennonites. May I hasten to add that I have not exhausted the number of paradoxes included in the Bible and known to the early church fathers. The Divine foundation of the Scriptures already defies anyone or

[41] Bender and Horsch, *op. cit.*, 88.

any movement to find everything which is there. But I do believe that it is quite accurate to say that theirs was the supreme triumph of re-discovering the theology of the Bible. Again may I say as tersely as possible that I am *not* here declaring that no other Christian movement in all history made these same discoveries. For one thing Anabaptism influenced many different groups, and the movement itself possessed several "wings," although it always maintained one main, authentic stream as our historians have shown. Moreover, apart from the Anabaptist tradition there have been profound Biblicists who have found the great riches of God's truth. I am only saying that I believe they truly discovered the systematic exposition of Biblical truth, whatever other movements may or may not have found in this regard.

As a matter of fact, it is important in concluding this paper to show that the seven original contributions of the Mennonite heritage, to use the list of Edward Yoder,[42] are really secondary contributions which simply lend support to the primary truths or events on which Christian theology is built. Consider it in this fashion. The common points of faith for all evangelical Christians are:[43]

Creation—God made us.
Christmas—God with us.
Calvary—God cleanses us.
Easter—God victorious over us.
Pentecost—God in us.

These truths are expressed paradoxically in the Bible as reviewed in these pages.

Now come the seven original contributions of the Mennonites:

Believers' baptism
Voluntary church membership
Freedom of conscience
Separation of church and state
Nonresistance
Nonswearing of oaths
Primacy of the New Testament

These contributions are meant to keep the Christian "on the track" of the primary Biblical doctrines which are the center of gravity.

42 Edward Yoder, *Our Mennonite Heritage, Number III* (Akron, 1942)

43 Adapted and expanded from E. Stanley Jones, *Christ of Every Road* (New York, 1929).

Infant baptism, for example, while false in itself led to tremendous corruption in the State churches by bringing in thousands of inwardly unconvinced individuals to church membership; brought them inside the portals of the church because of a baptism before the age of accountability. Believers' baptism would make this impossible. Voluntary church membership guards against the same abuse; separation of church and state does likewise. Nonresistance guards against the brutalization of Spirit which accompanies military training, keeping the personality receptive to the love of God and love for mankind. Nonswearing of oaths maintains a constant witness on the necessity of simple integrity for the maintenance of fellowship. The primacy of the New Testament is a barrier against some of the more obvious distortions of the Gospel on the part of those who see the civil ethics of the old covenant as normative for the new. Only by grasping this highly important but secondary role for the unique Mennonite principle does one avoid the pitfall of denominational idolatry and keep the focus on the great mountain-peaks of Biblical truth which are essentially the common heritage of evangelical Christianity. The paradoxical insight into this truth described in this paper is a final barrier against the partial, inadequate or undeveloped theologies which have created division and confusion by seizing on one side or another of the paradox. Since I believe genuine revivals of faith are consistent with the eschatological dimension of the Gospel, it is my prayer that this paper may assist in preparing the church for that re-energizing which the Holy Spirit alone can bring forth.

REASON AND OBEDIENCE*

An Old Anabaptist Letter of Peter Walpot (1571) and Its Meaning

ROBERT FRIEDMANN

On the table before me lies a large volume containing many beautiful old letters which often seem to address their stirring message almost personally to me. It is the *Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren,* which ought to be for all of us more than a mere record of the past, or a book with purely historical significance. Particularly one letter to which I have just opened and which really every one should read who seeks guidance on the rugged path of struggle for God, demonstrates that these sources were not alive only once upon a time, but are still alive today, for genuine life remains indestructible throughout the ages. It is the letter of one of the leaders of the old Hutterite churches of Moravia which, as is well known, represent in their communistic brotherhood what is probably the most beautiful example of the Anabaptist spirit. The writer is Peter Walpot (1519—1578), a cloth-shearer from the Eisack Valley in the Tyrol, who was chosen by his church as leader and bishop. In the year 1571 he wrote a letter to a certain otherwise unknown apothecary named Simon† in Cracow, Poland. This Simon belonged to the "Polish Church" (Socinians or Unitarians), which was one of the most pronounced rationalistic and intellectualizing wings of the Christianity of the 16th century. Some of the "Polish Christians" to be sure were characterized by a vigorous intellectual creativity, but they also suffered from inhibitions in regard to the pressing question of the "Nachfolge Christi" and the application of the commandments of the Sermon on the Mount. In the year 1570 Simon had visited the Hutterite congregations in Moravia with several fellow members, possibly with the purpose of uniting with the Hutterites, of whom they had heard so much that was good, and whose principle of baptism also appealed to them very

* Translated from the original German article in *Mennonitische Blätter* (May 1929) Vol. 76, pp. 44-47. The Walpot letter is found in the Wolkan edition of the *Geschichtbuch der Hutterischen Brüder.* (Wien und Macleod, Alberta, Canada, 1923) 343-352, and in the Zieglschmid edition (Philadelphia, 1943), 446-458. An extensive survey of the 350-400 extant Hutterite letters was published by Dr. Friedmann in the *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* XXVI (1929), pp. 30-80, 161-187. This was reviewed by Dr. Chr. Neff in the M. Q. R., V, pp. 148-152 (April, 1931).

† Wotschke in his *Kirchengeschichte Polens* ( ) mentions this Simon and gives his family name as Ronemberg.

much. However, according to the *Chronicle,* no agreement could be reached, reportedly because of the difference in doctrine, although this could scarcely have been the true reason for the failure. "They traveled around in the brotherhood for a time," says the *Chronicle,* "and inspected everything with a cold heart." The real reason for the lack of success was no doubt primarily the extent of the demands of the Hutterites, and the rigor of their way of life in carrying out these demands. The *Chronicle,* in describing the attitude of the Poles, says that "their worldly wisdom and knowledge, in which they viewed the work of the Lord as something too simple and elementary, prevented them from surrendering themselves to the service of the meek and crucified Christ." Accordingly Simon turned back again unsatisfied in spite of his great appreciation for what he found, and some time later wrote a letter to Walpot in which he presented with intelligence and skill the reasons for the "disagreement"—in the eyes of the Hutterites rather the grounds for the refusal to follow a "Christian life."

Walpot replied to Simon's communication in a letter which is the answer of the religious spirit to all intellectualism, to all "Gelehrtentum," to all the inadequacy of a faith broken by speculation and falsely oriented "enlightenment," a faith which is no longer capable of an unconditional commitment and attainment. The power which flows from this letter comes precisely from the fact that the Hutterian Brethren derived their way of life primarily from a deep simplicity of heart. One feels in Walpot's letter that here speaks a man who has authority for what he says; hence his words concern not only the Simon to whom they were addressed so long ago but also all of us today who are in a certain sense on a quest like Simon's. This letter, which in form is merely one of countless letters of repentance and admonition (*Buss-und Mahnbriefe*) produced by the Hutterian brotherhood, is basically however much more and towers high above most of them, for it deals with a problem of religious life which is also for us today a basic one. It may therefore justify a careful consideration in this article. Before presenting this discussion however it will be well to reproduce the letter itself.*

* Translated by Harold Bender from the original text in the Zieglschmid edition of the Hutterian Chronicle. *Die ällteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder,* Herausgegeben von A. J. F. Zieglschmid, Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, Philadelphia, 1943, pp. 446-458. As published in the *Mennonit. Blätter* the letter is a condensed form of the text found in the Wolkan edition of the *Chronicle.*

Peter Walpot's Letter to the Apothecary Simon and his Fellow-believers in Cracow, Poland

May the eternal, great, mighty, and awe-inspiring God of great counsels and eternal thoughts, whose eyes behold all the ways of humankind to reward everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his mind, grant grace to you and all who seek for it, that you may deny, forsake, and abandon yourself and your own will, may bring your reason into captivity to the obedience of Christ, in order that you may not walk, that you may not run, as though uncertain, not fighting as though beating the air, but as bringing your bodies into subjection and into a true submission, and by violence enter the strait gate and walk in the narrow way which leads to life, which few find, although many seek it who are not able to attain it. But man is tried in the furnace of resignation (*Gelassenheit*) as the gold is in the fire (Ecclesiastes 2, I Corinthians 3), and the fire will prove it in its time and make everything clear. May the gracious God give thee and you all through Christ His dearly beloved Son our Lord and Saviour a heart and spirit that, without any evasion of the flesh before the cross, will seek sincerely and solely His truth and honor to the salvation of your souls; and I wish for you at all times from the bottom of my heart that you may become His true followers and disciples.

Dear friendly Simon. I have received your letter addressed to me, dated November first of the past [15] 70th year, have read it and its contents, and have well understood your request that I remember your zeal and that of your fellow-believers in all your thinking, state, and intentions, but have not been able to make much sense of it; because, for a time you praise us and give us good testimony desiring to learn, and request admonition, and make promise to give up everything that is a hindrance to salvation, and then shortly on the other hand you boast yourself to be children of God who have learned something from God, and whom He rules, who have the spirit of God, etc. Third and last the letter has a sort of tone which I cannot understand, so that I am astonished at your writing and say that it is only empty sounding words with nothing behind them, a mere clanging cymbal. The fact that in it you give me such praise and honor does not make it for that reason any more pleasing, and I do not respect it any more than Christ did the praise of the Pharisees who also called Him Master and said (Matthew 22), "We know that thou art true and that thou teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; and further regardest not the person of man." We can well see the true state of their hearts and that they had no desire to obey His teaching. Likewise did also the young scribe who came to the Lord saying (Matthew 19), "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?", professing that he had kept all of the commandments of God from his youth up. When however the Lord said that if he desired to be perfect he should go and sell all that he had and give to the poor and he would have treasure in heaven, and should come and follow Him and take up the cross, then he became sorrowful, unhappy, and depressed, and went away.

If therefore I with Christ would say (as should be said to you in truth) to you (who tell me that I am a noble instrument of the living God), that if you desire to be saved and show that you fear God and know and love Him and desire to serve and please Him alone, likewise that you have no greedy and money-seeking heart as you are reputed to have; if therefore your intention accords fully to the aforesaid and you desire to be saved and to secure and have treasure in heaven, you should sell all, forsake and give up your own temporal riches, and loose your heart therefrom, for one cannot seek and receive both at the same time since one chokes out the other, [if I should say all this] I fear you would soon have enough of me. That would however be a good test as to whether you are true followers and disciples of Christ, whether you make room for the Spirit of Christ within you and let the same reign over you, as you apparently think you do.

Herewith I admonish you to devote yourself to continual and earnest prayer (which as you write, should be your certain weapon and victory) that you may conquer your flesh and set your spurs into it.

If you recognize and confess that I am the builder of a Noah's Ark, and if you are not hypocrites, tempters or stubborn and rebellious and disobedient to the truth, why do you not enter into this ark, outside of which there will be no salvation, into which God abundantly invites you, particularly since it is still open as you yourself have said. But believe me that it can be closed to you in one hour and in one moment and locked with heavy bands.

Consider well that you are the son-in-law of Lot whom he had invited to flee Sodom for rescue, but they did not count it to be necessary and mocked it, believing that no punishment would befall them. But just as it was in the times of Noah and Lot it must also be in the days of the Son of Man. Woe to those heavy with child and that give suck at that time. And to whom shall I compare this generation? Indeed it is like to children who sit in the market place and call to their companions, "We have piped unto you and ye would not dance, we have mourned and you would not weep."

My dear Simon, look within yourself and learn to know yourself better. Certainly according to your own testimony about yourself you have omitted such an important thing, yea, the most important thing on earth. You have not reached the first step of the ladder of the will of God, namely that of true submission and union with His people. How then do you expect to carry it through? You must begin otherwise, to walk in the footsteps and within the bounds of Christ. For if the beginning is not holy, how can the dough be holy? But if the root is holy, the branches will also be holy.

And certainly, if the Holy Spirit were poured out into your hearts and you were partakers of Him, He would not permit you to remain outside of His gathered church in your special way of life and choice, but would lead you into it in all truth and in the same mind of Christ. For it is the way and method of the Spirit of God and the mind of Christ, and He does not permit division and schism, wherefore you are not to be recognized as partaking of the Spirit of God, but rather as those who

lack the same. For one can see from the very beginning that the multitude of the believers were of one heart and soul, and were together of one accord. And although, on account of land, place, and location, they could not always be together, yet they were in fellowship according to one rule in the spiritual sense and according to a common faith, for they desired to maintain their calling and Christian devotion unbroken and appear blameless before God and His apostles. They therefore held and taught assuredly one baptism, one spirit, one Lord, one God and Father of us all, and one mediator; likewise one fellowship of the saints and one only entrance into the sheepfold of which Christ speaks that whosoever climbs in another way (except by me, that is by my body which is my Church to whom I have given and bestowed by my mighty word the key and authority to bind and to loose) he is a thief and a murderer. Therefore, finally, whosoever desires to find peace and union with God and to be rid of his sins, he must be released and declared free through the intercession of the only ordained and gathered Church of God and through its true servants of Christ. Otherwise his sin and transgression will remain held against him and sealed in bundles. For never has man been able to forgive his own sin nor to raise himself up to the Lord.

That it is true, however, and that I hold the opinion that the Lord Christ after His resurrection gave authority to His Church, and that His authority thereafter was not broken, is powerfully proved by the example of Saul-Paul. For when He struck him down on the way, and he asked what he should do, He sent him into the city to Ananias who had to lay hands on him and baptize him. After this, although he had been separated from his mother's womb and called by God to do the work of the Gospel and establish the obedience of faith among the heathen, he nevertheless went down to Jerusalem and conferred with the elders of the Church, Peter, James, and John, who saw in him the gift which the Lord had entrusted to him, and they agreed together and gave him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. Also he was called and established in faith by Ananias and joined to the body of Christ so that he would not run in vain in his service and work on behalf of the Gospel outside of the order of the Church and the apostles. Likewise in the case of Cornelius, the God-fearing captain, although an angel of God came to him and said, "Your prayer has been heard by God," the angel nevertheless commanded him and sent him to Joppa to the Apostle Peter from whom he had to receive the words through which he was saved and by which he submitted to the obedience of the truth through baptism. The same is to be observed in the case of the Eunuch of the Queen Candace of Ethiopia and the Apostle Philip. The Lord always, after His resurrection, raised up His established church and His messengers out of the same to life in faith, namely those called and foreordained.

What Christ said to His apostles and messengers is still true today: "Who hears you hears me and who despises you despises me; whosoever does not receive you nor accept your message, depart from thence. Verily I say to you, it will be better for Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of judgment than for such." If anyone thinks and holds otherwise, I say that

his spirit is not upright, but he is rather a companion of the thieves and murderers who climb up another way.

All this I do not write to you, dear Simon, in order that you and yours should look upon me or us and build upon us as human beings, far be it. If you do not recognize this as the truth and as the foundation of the apostles on which one must build, and hold our word to be God's Word, as it truly is, then let it alone, and continue in your old manner of life and place.

I write you at your request (for the sake of my conscience and the honor of God) to admonish you and warn you, and I do not speak in order that you should give yourselves up to the Lord in His and our church and sign as members for my word's sake (although it is not my words). It lies within your power of choice. If the Word of God does not lead you to it and to the testimony of your conscience, then everything is lost.

No one is compelled to do this, as you imagine, and if we knew of anyone in our midst who possessed only a fictitious freedom but in his heart felt otherwise, he should not have any continuance with us.* And even if he should conceal it from us, God would know him, and would blot him out of the book of His people and the members of His household, out of His book of life. The Lord desires a new heart and spirit and a voluntary church which out of its own free will separates itself from all evil and all taint of sin both within and without. And not alone this, but every faithful zealous soul and friend of God is responsible, and bound by the love of God, to testify against all evil, unrighteousness, works of darkness and ungodly life of the world and all unbelievers, also to reprove them and to remind them of their evil ways, and to warn them on account of their transgression, to use the sword of the spirit against them. If he does not do so, he is a hypocrite before God and man.

I heartily believe you, that you do not wish to condemn (*verdammen*) anyone, since you also profess not to be able to save anyone. God alone can do this. And that this is given to Christ, know even people who are ignorant and foolish in the sight of God. Indeed, it is common knowledge which many know that no human being can condemn another. But under this umbrella sit all false and perverted people and in truth all hypocrites. Such a little umbrella gives them good protection from the heat which would otherwise shine down upon them so that they would be brought into temptation. For this reason they must make for themselves such a protection.

We do not condemn anyone (would much rather save one if possible), since no human being can do this, but the evil works of each one condemn him. But likewise as the Apostle Paul says, when Noah prepared the ark to the saving of his household and through the ark condemned the world, so still today all those who follow Christ and the Church of believers (which bears the likeness of the ark), condemn this world by going out from and separating from it with the testimony that its works are evil and that if they do not repent they will not become heirs of salvation.

* This is a fundamental passage for the concept of freedom of conscience as held by the Anabaptists.

Let yourself now be put on the balances and see whether you will not be found wanting. Truly here is a place which you find very useful for the peace of the flesh and opportunity for the flesh, that you should not point out and indicate to ungodly sinners in the world (which you have in your midst) its condemnation and godlessness, so that someone might possibly turn to the right. Here indeed your little spark of light looks like a burned-out cinder. Is this truly admonishing, disciplining, and edifying yourself and others, as you profess to do?

But Christ speaks otherwise to His disciples and followers, namely, "You are the salt of the earth, and shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." If you would do this, if you would declare openly or remain silent for the sake of the truth of God and not for the sake of pleasing men, you would soon learn otherwise.

He who understands the difference of faith and of a good conscience knows how long he can live in this hired house without hypocrisy, sin, and a seared conscience (especially in such doings, works, and activities as you and your fellow-believers practice) and not be unspotted from the world and separated from it. But I know well that you can swallow and digest pretty well all kinds of bread. I write this to you as a warning out of the fear of God, according to the truth, and not out of ill-will or any kind of superiority as you may imagine. The Lord be a witness between us that I know myself to be free of your easy charge. I trust God will be my witness, that I and my brethren seek to work out our salvation with fear and trembling and have rooted out everything else out of our hearts, and even though we must say with Paul that our knowledge and prophesying is only patchwork that we may apprehend that for which we have been apprehended by God or Christ Jesus, and that we are not yet perfect but follow after it, we nevertheless have no doubt at all of the foundation and the genuine grace and truth which leads to life on which we stand, but know of a surety that this is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, since Jesus Christ is the cornerstone on which we build and are built. We have good information, assurance, and testimony of all the Holy Scripture and prophecy together with the cloud of witnesses around us. So we hold steadfast until we are taken away [to heaven].

But if we should know of shortcoming, error, or failure, and should be shown the same by the word and testimony of God, the Lord knows our heart, we would not think of holding such stubbornly against Him (as we plead in the sight of God in all our meetings) but much rather give up and correct, and punish that which is unrighteous and evil whether in one or in several persons in our midst, and put it away according to the word of the Lord. But you, hypocrites, who know how to discern the signs of the heavens, why do you not judge yourselves according to what is right?

It almost seems that you think that we hold ourselves too high or give ourselves out to be someone as though no one were good enough for us. But you say (certainly not meaning yourselves) that you have to prove it upon God's searching; take care. But if we should bring your reputation (such as we do thus far not have ourselves) to the light and

examine it, your self-esteem would be much too great and would, we fear, surpass our own.

If we are to tell you the free and full truth before the presence of God, we cannot hold you in truth for the type of person you give yourself out to be, or believe. And what is still more, we can not recognize you as a people of God or as brethren or as our brethren for you are lacking in the righteousnesses and the evidences of Christianity or of a genuine Christian man. For where is your true submission in baptism, your new birth and renunciation of the world, sin, devil, your own flesh and self-will. Yea, indeed, that which is most necessary is lacking among you, whereby we see that your claim (that God is dwelling in you) is not good.

You should rather consider yourself to be one of the hired servants who still are standing idle at the market place (Matthew 22). Ask your own heart why you are not at work in the vineyard, and why you are not accepted by the Lord of the vineyard. Among you there is no right separation and withdrawal from the world (Hebrews 10, Ephesians 5), and from the unbelievers, neither from the unfruitful works of darkness. Where are your assemblies which should not be forsaken as the manner of some is. They lie desolate and dilapidated. You, however, are sitting in your own well-built houses for the sake of your own benefit (and not your neighbors' and brethren's), profit, and greed so that it might well be said to you with the prophets, "Yes, you have time to dwell in your well-built houses while the House of God must remain waste and desolate." O, the Lord is not near such and does not love them as His children, as you suppose, following after your own way in your hearts.

Where is the love which you should have toward your neighbor as toward yourself, although you profess that what you possess is for your neighbor's use and aid? I would have to inquire of your servants, neighbors, and brethren how much of yours is applied to their use. I should like to test and see whether your righteousness exceeds that of the unbelievers and the rich who also cast much into the treasury. I would like to know whether love comes out of your faith as you claim, a faith that seeks not its own good but that of its neighbor.

How do you exercise among yourselves and in your midst the Christian and proper ban, excommunication, and putting away that which is evil and sinful, to say nothing of the godly and brotherly discipline in relation to the lesser trespasses and shortcomings, which belongs to the people of God, and in the absence of which conditions develops as in a dilapidated house where there is no caretaker. But where the Lord does not build the house then everything together is in vain. But if I were to try to continue to hold before you the mirror, I would need to prepare several more quills.

So you see that you do not know yourself but rather are quite pleasing to yourself. If you were not so proud you would learn to know yourself. Rather be concerned about yourself and not about others only. You continue to write that we should pray to God for you that our hearts may become one in the Lord, which we do and have done always for you and for all zealous ones who hunger and thirst after righteousness and which we desire from the heart. But what good does it do you if meanwhile

you do not seek the prayer and intercession of the church of God by which we ourselves are helped? You do not after all desire to seek the Lord with a whole heart, without which you can in no case be helped to the truth.

But what shall I say, since you believe that God has poured out among you such a marvelous fire that you are made to wonder at what God may have in mind to do with you. O, that you might become quiet, then you might possibly be considered wise. And what is still worse, you let the thought arise in you that the face of God is no longer terrible to you. You are foolish enough to step into His presence lightly. In this you are like the Pharisee who also stood so boldly before God saying, "I thank thee God that I am not like other men." Yes, there is still much lacking in you, for you must first take your place with the open sinner in the temple of his congregation behind the door and beat your breast in truth, not lift up your eyes toward heaven, much less in the presence of God, and thus become justified so that God may be merciful to you.

You write and you give the impression as though you have already surrendered yourself to the obedience of God; that you have already taken your reason captive unto His obedience.* To this I say that, in addition to the fact that your heart rules and acts as leader among you, you have indeed given obedience to act according to your own free will, desire, and pleasure. (This however is not a purchased Christian, but means that you make yourself into one and are not a newborn one or a truly surrendered one.) This obedience is not that which Paul and the apostles sought to establish among the heathen.

It may be that you will suffer martyrdom, my Simon, and along with it will sing enough and say enough of obedience and the meek Christ (*armen Christus*). It is true that you write that so far everything has been easy and lovely, etc. Herewith, therefore, I will now tell you something else (a sad thing), and will not conceal it from you. A certain great Lord here in this country, for his own reasons, expelled and drove us out of his territory, as many of our brethren and sisters as live anywhere in one domain, about a thousand adults, and three to four hundred children some of whose parents had already experienced the time of their deliverance while among us. A second portion endured prison and tribulation outside of the land through tyrants and suffered unto death for the truth. A third portion still lie in bonds for the Gospel's sake ensnared under the power of the same enemies of the truth. And if God does not specially intervene it may yet come to the place, and not for the first time, that we may be forced to leave and go out under the open sky, lie in field and forest with want and deprivation. If you should be along in such an experience, and together with your children have scarcely one poor piece of bread in two or three days, then things will look otherwise, and more patience will be necessary. Then you will be for once pushed into the furnace of testing and it will become known what is in your heart. If you desire to become a true disciple and follower of Christ and

* This is a quotation from II Cor. 10:5. For the proper understanding of Walpot's thought it is important to use the German version which reads *"vernunft"* or "reason" where the English version reads "thought" or *"gedanke."*

a member of His church, then you must certainly prepare yourself for such experiences. Then you will need to lay aside a portion of the disputings according to your high knowledge and understanding, and will need to wholly hold fast to God and look out to Him with a humble and staunch heart.

Further, however, you should know that when you were with us, your wolf's clothing did not take away from us our hope that you would become a member in Christ, as you tried to give the impression. You would probably have liked to become a sheep in it [the wolf's clothing] and it would not have hindered you. What you ate and drank with us did not disturb us, we gladly gave it to you. And where this was not the case, and you took food intemperately or when it was not needed, we would not have given it to you. But what did disturb us was the fact that you resisted the church, and that therefore no fruit or improvement resulted, as is still the case today. According to you the church would have had to adapt itself to you and learn from you, you who are not yet on the right foundation of God, and yourself needed to be taught the very first beginning of the divine word, and lay the foundation of repentance from dead works and faith in God, of baptism, of doctrine, of laying on of hands, of resurrection from the dead, and of eternal judgment.

For this reason we had cause, and divine cause, as we should know, since you desired us to consider you as brethren though you were not so in truth, to separate ourselves from you and to avoid you as Paul commands that if there is anyone who calls himself a brother and is covetous, and brings another doctrine, which does not conform to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine of godliness, and is admonished once and a second time, we should have nothing to do with him (I Corinthians 5, 8); from such a one we should also not accept a greeting so long and until we observe a real conversion and profession.

This I have not wanted to withhold from you, my dear Simon, as an answer to your writing, for I thought that I wanted to give you to understand the whole truth as it is in my heart without fear or favor. And please accept this in the best of intentions, since otherwise your word would be true. I would consider him a dear friend who would tell me and warn me of what I did not myself know.

If you can now accept this, I would gladly wish you eternal salvation as I myself have, but you would of necessity need to change your way and thinking and be quite otherwise as if you were truly born again. Therefore, since no one knows when the Lord of the House will come, whether at evening, at midnight, or at cockcrow, see to it that you be ready, so that the hour will not find you sleeping and overtake you as the snare does the birds.

For it is not enough and far too little to say, "I desire not to be my own but that the Lord may work in me what pleases him, here I am, do according to thy will" (Luke 12). The servant who knows his Lord's will is obliged not to stand around too long but to go and to do it; otherwise he will receive his due punishment. And what the heart is to accept should not be continually and too long tested and considered. Hear what Elias the Man of God says: "How long will ye hang on both sides.

If it be the Lord God, follow Him; if it be Baal, follow him!" I tell you in the presence of God the Lord will come and find you not ready and prepared, and I then say to you, you will not be able to hide yourself among the remaining seven thousand of the time of Elias who had not bowed their knees to Baal.

Accordingly may you bring forth right fruit and works and repentance because of your perverted conduct and unrenewed life, so that you may be preserved and may receive grace to help in the time of need.

I hereby invite you to the marriage and to the great feast which the King of Heaven is preparing for His Son. If you remain outside, the guilt and your blood will be on your own head. Behold the bridegroom comes. Go out, go out to meet Him. The spirit and the bride say, Come, Lord Jesus, and he that heareth saith come, and he that thirsteth, let him come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely (Revelation 22).

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all who seek and desire it out of a right heart. Amen, Yea, Amen.

Peter Walpot, a Servant of Jesus Christ and His Church.

What is the general theme of this long and impressive though simple epistle; what is its meaning and its justification? I believe it is the great antithesis between reason and obedience. Who of us has not experienced this problem in its deepest form, if we indeed still experience within us a living faith and do not seek simply a soothing solution in sheer compromises. Seen from another point of view, this problem is at the same time also the great problem of freedom. Through Christ, through God and His Word, we have become free in the highest sense, but at the same time also we are truly bound in contrast to that freedom which the irreligious man means when he speaks of his "autonomy" and glories in his rationality, and to whom therefore there is scarcely a word so painful as the word "obedience." Indeed we are free and unfree at the same time. God is in us and at the same time outside of us; we are apostles as well as instruments, coworkers as well as servants of God, and both always at the same time. Here lie paradoxes for the intellectual thinker which are not to be dissolved. Hence we are so frequently inclined to postpone and delay the decisive action. "This is not crucial," we say; or, "We have to give the world its due." And so we all, without noticing it, are on the road to secularization of our religion even when we possess the deepest insights. For we no longer live our faith, yes, we deny it almost daily in our doing.

The penitential challenge of Walpot's letter strikes a powerful blow at this inner schism. All of us, if we are only open of heart,

can be aroused by it out of our self-righteousness and our disposition to justify by clever theory the weakness of our love and the inhibitions which keep us from a genuine following of Christ.

But what shall we do? Shall we renounce reason in order to be obedient to the Word of God which is given to us? Or shall we be unfaithful to the Word of God in order to follow reason alone? We cannot ever renounce reason, that is quite clear. And we ought not to do it at all, since this would lead to an obedience which is of the sort which men of the Middle Ages adopted, and by which "following Christ" unconsciously becomes "imitation of Christ." Shall we then renounce obedience and obey only our intellect, which is all too often no intelligence at all but only a negation and an impoverishment, an intoxication with itself and its might? This we cannot do either, insofar as the eternal and absolute has ever touched us.

But now we must ask the further question, does "following reason" really mean "withdrawing oneself from God," or is not reason rather only a neutral instrument which may be used just as well in following the way of fulfillment as the way of estrangement, so that in the last analysis everything depends upon the man and the manner of his faith, rather than upon the instruments? And is not therefore the solution (at least theoretically) to be found in the recognition that religion and religious life are only possible when obedience is born of freedom, since it is an obedience to the truth? Walpot's letter proves this in the deepest sense. His very speech is at one and the same time both humility and self-assertion, and out of it speaks the power derived from standing in certainty as well as the drive brought about by the motivation which comes through the holy experience of being commissioned as a prophet or an apostle. For precisely this is "obedience," that one follows this unutterable call and takes love seriously even when it means severe struggles and conflict. By "obedience" we are never to understand the sacrifice of the intellect, since this question does not involve "doctrines" against which the intelligence would revolt. Obedience means only acceptance of the call, and therefore sacrifice and devotion of life to higher service. In a broader sense it also means consistency and therefore frequently the opposition and offense of the world, yea, on occasion even readiness for martyrdom, —all of which are things which are unknown to pure rationality or

to a humanized religion, because the secret of such a life is mystery to all those who do not know that he who offers himself receives a thousandfold in return.

But we should not choose to follow this often difficult way only because Jesus has pointed it out (for this would mean the much condemned "heteronomy" of ethics) but because it is the way of truth and the way to the truth. "Only he who possesses perfect love needs no law" (Hans Denck, 1526). But we erring human beings, who still have so far to go to reach perfection, are urgently in need of a leader and master who will lead us to the point where we can see the goal before our eyes. This all of us feel. And so "obedience" has its rightful claim externally upon us in spite of all the validity of reason, and therefore does not represent a commandment of compulsion over against free will, since it on the contrary requires free will as a prerequisite. On the other hand, it is also true that "simplicity of heart" (which Matthew calls being "poor in spirit") is more likely to lead to that discipleship of Christ which reveals itself in fellowship and love, than is the self-glorification of an intellect which, as we constantly experience, dissolves all of life into problems until in the final analysis we are compelled to depend passively on saving doctrine or on the grace of a saving church. It is this very dialectic under which we all suffer because it prevents us from attaining the decisive stage of our life. But even though we recognize this and know very well that we cannot for the most part live as we really would desire, we should nevertheless not all too soon justify our shortcomings by theories and words. Much rather we should never cease the striving within us to reach that consistency and rigor which Peter Walpot has pointed out with the deepest sense of call and commission as the genuine way of following Christ and which the apostle Paul calls the "way of obedience."

Note.—Peter Walpot also wrote at the same time another letter* with similar content "to several in Poland." It may be of some value to reproduce here the main points which will add emphasis to the message of the earlier letter.

It has come out that those [who were sent by the Polish brethren of Moravia] desire to teach us, which we however, as those who were not built on the sand, could not accept, since this would mean letting ourselves be judged by those who have not altogether renounced the world and the

* *Geschichtbuch* (Wolkan) 341-2, (Zieglschmid) 443-446.

heathen way of life, for mere knowledge and learning is not enough. Also they should not think that the church would prefer to listen to them above us because of their much speaking or great wisdom, but would rather first have them tested and proved through tribulation, prison, bonds, and hard labor. My plea and admonition would be to you, if there is someone among you who would desire to so order his life that he may be able to stand in the judgment before God, that such an one should lay hold of things in another way, namely with work and life, and should not be satisfied with merely knowing the truth, since then a heavier judgment will rest upon him. Therefore, dear men and all zealous souls, since you know that human life is transient and temporary, do not postpone or delay your conversion.

EXTINCT OHIO MENNONITE CHURCHES

V. The Churches in Ashland County, I

John Umble

References to the Ashland County Mennonite Church occur in correspondence printed in the *Herald of Truth* as late as 1891 and the last member of the Pleasant Ridge Mennonite Church died in Vermillion Township in 1915. Research in an attempt to collect the few remaining reliable bits of historical information soon revealed that for several reasons the task was highly complex. In the first place Ashland County proved to be the former home of not one Mennonite church but at least four: one Reformed Mennonite, two (old) Mennonite and one General Conference Mennonite. The story is still further complicated by the two closely related Brethren in Christ congregations whose members bear the same family names as the Mennonites. Then too Ashland County, as is well known, is the educational center of the Progressive Brethren. Some of the descendants of the early Mennonites united with that denomination. The Church of God, also, made inroads on the Mennonite membership as early as 1835, and the United Brethren in Christ probably before 1850. The writer has not been able to find any accurate historical data regarding the Reformed Mennonite congregation.

Confusing also is the ultimate union of many of the descendants of the one Mennonite group with the descendants of the Lutheran and Reformed co-immigrants of the Mennonites to form the Lutheran Church in Vermillion Township. This and the one remaining Brethren in Christ Church in Milton Township are the only live ex-Mennonite congregations in what was once a large and prosperous Mennonite community extending from six miles south and southeast of Ashland in a westerly and northwesterly direction to Olivesburg and Savannah five miles west and six miles northwest of the city of Ashland.

Another confusing element is the conflict in authorities and the disagreement of certain histories with such reliable sources as county deed records. Hill in his *History of Ashland County,* for instance, lists Peter Imhoff as a resident of Milton Township in 1825. But Peter Imhoff in 1825 was only nineteen and was living in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He had come from Germany

in 1824. Two years later he visited Ashland County but finding that he did not have enough money to purchase a farm he returned to Lancaster County and worked two years more at six dollars a month. Hill, however, admits that he bases his statement largely on tradition.

Climenhaga accepts the tradition that the River Brethren first came to Ashland soon after 1840.[1] This may be true, but if it is, then the most prominent members of the congregation in Ashland County came to this section as Mennonites before 1825 and united with the Brethren in Christ Church later. Climenhaga does not make this point clear. He states that the first Brethren in Christ settlers were John Brubaker, a minister, Peter Brubaker, a deacon, Christian Kauffman, a deacon, and Joseph Charles, that they came soon after 1840, and that Henry Hoover by request of some of his friends came before 1850. But most of these were living in Richland or Ashland County at least as early as 1830. The first written records of the Brethren in Christ congregation in Ashland County date from 1850.

Regarding the Ashland County Mennonites a few general facts can be stated with certainty. The first Mennonites coming to Ashland County, Ohio, from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, settled in the vicinity of Five Points about four miles west and three and a half miles south of the city of Ashland. After holding services in their homes for a time, they built a meetinghouse about a half mile northwest of Five Points on the road leading to Paradise Hill and on the east side of land purchased originally by Benjamin Brubaker, Sr.[2]

Ten or twelve years after the first Mennonites settled in the vicinity of Five Points another settlement sprang up east of the first. Or perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say that the settlement developed in that direction and eventually the congregation built a second meetinghouse about four miles east and one and one-half mile south of Five Points. It was located in the middle of the north side of Section Seven in Vermillion Township on what was then known as the Mansfield Road.

Meanwhile some of the German Mennonites, newly arrived in America, had settled in the same neighborhood but had difficulty

[1] Climenhaga, A. W., *History of the Brethren in Christ Church*, E. V. Publishing Company, Nappanee [1942], p. 159.

[2] This was in the northeast quarter of Section Thirty-Three of Milton Township.

accommodating themselves to the discipline and religious practices of the (old) Mennonite group. When it developed that they could not live in harmony with the Mennonite settlers from Lancaster, some of the newer German immigrants built a church of their own one mile east of the other. It was located in the middle of the south side of Section Five and also on the Mansfield Road. This church was five miles south of Ashland and about three miles northwest of Hayesville and the congregation eventually became a member of the General Conference of Mennonites of North America.

New additions to the growing settlement also found homes north of Five Points beyond Paradise Hill and Olivesburg and even as far north as Savannah and Nankin, but apparently no other meetinghouses were built by the Mennonites. Many were related by ties of friendship and kinship to the Mennonite groups in Chester Township, Wayne County, on the east and in Richland and Crawford counties on the west.

The Brethren in Christ group held services in their homes until 1874 when they erected the Chestnut Grove meetinghouse in Mifflin Township, Ashland County, about one mile east of Five Points. The next year they built Pleasant Grove in Mifflin Township, Richland County, three and one-half miles south of Five Points. As stated above, Chestnut Grove is the only surviving congregation of the six Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. This article will attempt to disentangle the threads and weave a coherent story from the few remnants that have been preserved.

Ashland County was formed from Richland, Lorain, Huron and Wayne counties by legislative enactment on February 24, 1846. Originally it was a part of Wayne County. Wayne was the third county formed from the territory ceded by the Indians to the United States at the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. It was the largest county in the United States comprising nearly all of what is now the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan. After 1806-07 a large part of what is now Ashland was a part of Fairfield County which had been created by proclamation of Governor Arthur St. Clair on December 9, 1800.

In 1808 the counties of Licking and Knox were created by the legislature and their boundaries defined. The boundaries of Richland County were also defined, but the administration was left to

the Knox County authorities until the population should grow to five hundred. In 1813, with a population of five hundred, the people organized Richland County and made Mansfield the county seat. When Ashland County was formed in 1846 its eight southern and southwestern townships were taken from Richland County. These included the townships of Montgomery, Milton, Mifflin, and Vermillion where most of the early Mennonite settlers took up their residence. Prior to 1846, therefore, all of those who settled in these townships were known as residents of Richland County. This adds another confusing element, especially since the county line dividing Richland and Ashland in 1846 left about one-third of Mifflin Township in the latter county and two-thirds in the former so that there now is a Mifflin Township in each county.

At an early date immigrants from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and Rockingham County, Virginia, had reached Richland County. One of these was John Huber, born in New Holland, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, who had moved to Richland County from Rockingham County, Virginia, in 1822. One of John Huber's sisters died in Henry County, Indiana, and a brother at Sterling, Illinois. A John Hoover, born in Virginia on June 16, 1822, was the first conductor on the Sandusky-Mansfield Railroad. An Anna Hoover, who had married a Hessian Revolutionary soldier named Brown, lived seven miles north of Mansfield. A certain Christian Huber, born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, moved from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Fairfield County, Ohio, and finally removed to Richland County in 1812. This Christian Huber seems to have been one of the Lancaster County Mennonites who on moving to Virginia was swept into the Baptist Church during the religious awakening about the beginning of the nineteenth century.[3]

Hill's history of Ashland County gives the following dates for the organization of the Ashland (Richland) County townships which furnished homes for the early Mennonite settlers: Mifflin, 1815; Milton and Montgomery, 1816; Vermillion, Dec. 1816; Orange, 1818. Hill thinks that Peter Brubaker already was living in the county when these townships were organized. He also mentions as very early settlers several Pennsylvania emigrants: in Milton Township—Alexander Reed, Michael Smeltzer, and Peter and Ben-

[3] Further information regarding this Huber family may be found in the *Huber-Hoover History*. Christian Huber is mentioned on page 46.

jamin Brubaker; in Mifflin—Leonard Croninger;[4] and in Vermillion —William Reed.

Hill admits that he relies chiefly on tradition for the following lists of Milton Township residents in 1825, but most of these were living here at that time or moved into the settlement within the next few years: Benjamin, Peter, Peter (who usually wrote himself Peter Brubaker, east) and Benjamin (Jr.) Brubaker; Adam, Samuel Jacob, and Jacob Baum; Peter Greenawalt; John Holderman; John, Peter, William, and Theodore Imhoff; John Kauffman; John, Abraham, and Jacob Myers;[5] Joseph Mellinger; John and Peter Nusbaum; Michael and John Smeltzer.

It is interesting to compare this list with a few of the early real estate purchases in southern Milton and northern Mifflin townships.[6] At an early date Benjamin Brubaker acquired title to Section Thirty-Three in Milton Township and built a meetinghouse on the east side of the northwest quarter of the section about a half mile northwest of an intersection known locally as Five Points. This became the center of the early community. The land purchases listed in the appendix are located with reference to this point. Name of purchaser and date of purchase are given.

The Brubacher Meetinghouse near Five Points South of Paradise Hill

From the above it seems established that the earliest Mennonite settlers were grouped around Five Points approximately eight miles northeast of Mansfield and five miles southwest of Ashland. A decade after the beginning of this settlement several families of recent German immigrants, the Imhoffs, Ballys, and Hartmans purchased land to the north, around Paradise Hill and extending beyond the present Imhoff cemetery as far as Savannah. About the

[4] This may be the son of Leonard Croninger (Groninger) mentioned as a resident of the Buffalo Valley in Union County, Pennsylvania, in connection with the history of the Amish settlement in that valley. See *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* VII (July, 1933), 162.

[5] The name Myers or Myer was pronounced so nearly like Moyer by the Pennsylvania Germans that it was frequently spelled Moyer and by some members of the family this was adopted as the correct spelling. The same is true of the name Beyer or Byer which occurs in later Ashland County history as Boyer. A certain Jacob Moyer purchased a three-acre lot in Hayesville on April 29, 1850. An Abraham Moyer, born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on April 11, 1802, married a Susanna Albert, born 1804. They moved to Harrison Township, Elkhart County, Indiana, from Ohio, in 1847. Some of their children and grandchildren were members of the United Brethren Church.

[6] See appendix for this list of early land purchases in the vicinity of Five Points.

same time new arrivals from Germany settled four or five miles eastward where the Pleasant Ridge, Risser, and Strickland cemeteries and the Stone Lutheran Church are now located. Prominent among these early German settlers were the Beutlers, Rissers, and Krehbiels.

During the next few decades families kept moving in from Germany, from Lancaster, York, Juniata, Butler and Fayette counties in Pennsylvania; from Virginia, and from Columbiana, Stark, Fairfield and Wayne counties in Ohio. But even before 1840 some were already removing to Crawford and Wood counties in Ohio; Dekalb, Elkhart, and St. Joseph counties, in Indiana; and even to points in Illinois and Iowa. Some ultimately returned to western Wayne County (Chester Township) where an Old Order Mennonite congregation still flourishes or to eastern Wayne County southeast of Orrville. Why Mennonites have entirely disappeared from Ashland County, dotted as it is with prosperous farms and fine old homesteads, is not entirely clear, but the unfolding of the details of settlement and the subsequent history may furnish some hints to the reasons.

As already stated one of the earliest and most influential Mennonite settlers was Benjamin Brubaker, of Lancaster County, who seems to have purchased all of Section Thirty-Three in Milton Township adjoining Five Points on the west. Here on the west side of the northeast quarter he built a house and barn about 1823.

John Risser and his family who arrived in Ashland County from Germany in 1832 enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Brubaker while Risser was searching for a house to serve as a temporary residence. The aged couple living in a two-room cabin vacated one room for Risser and his family. Here the Rissers spent eight days. Risser writes somewhat in detail of the Brubaker family. Benjamin Brubaker, reports Risser, had moved to this frontier ten years ago, that is in 1822 or 1823, in order to provide farms for his eight children. Brubaker purchased a quarter section for each of them. All the land had been entirely wooded and without a house. The one son had now cleared one hundred acres of his land. One son-in-law had built a brick house during the previous year (1831 or 1832). If the tradition is correct that Peter Brubaker (east) built the first brick house in Milton Township, then it must be true that Mary, the wife of Peter Brubaker (east), was a daughter

of Benjamin Brubaker, hence the first cousin of her husband. All of the other children, according to Risser, still lived in their original houses—huts or cabins he prefers to call them. One son, however, probably Benjamin, Jr., built a brick house in 1833 or 1834. Henry Brubaker, a son, lived at that time only a hundred steps from his parents. Henry Brubaker and John Weaver (Risser writes "Heinrich Brubacher"[7] and "Johannes Weber") spent eight days helping Risser find a suitable cabin. When they found one, Risser received it rent free, "because it was standing empty anyway!"

Benjamin Brubaker, his sons and sons-in-law seem to have prospered in Milton Township. The wife of Peter Brubaker, the nephew of Benjamin, was named Mary, (married, 1818, in Pennsylvania) and in spite of Hill's statement to the contrary, she probably was a daughter of Benjamin Brubaker, hence a first cousin of her husband.[8] This Peter Brubaker later was ordained a deacon in the Brethren in Christ Church. John Brubaker, the father of Peter Brubaker (east), and the brother of Benjamin, Sr., may not have moved to Ohio; but it is possible that he was the John Brubaker who died October 12, 1868, and was buried in the Pleasant Ridge cemetery, aged 77-11-9. His wife Catharine died August 13, 1876, aged 72-5-10, and also was buried at Pleasant Ridge.

When the early settlers arrived, Milton and Mifflin townships, in fact most of Ashland County, was an almost unbroken forest of large timber. Naturally all kinds of produce were scarce, and for the small crops raised there was practically no market on account of the lack of transportation. At an early date a local merchant refused a bushel of wheat for a quarter of a pound of powder. On one occasion Peter Bechtel, Sr., drove to Sandusky, Ohio, from Ashland

[7] Heinrich Brubacher was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, September 16, 1795, the son of Benjamin Brubacher, Sr., and moved to Richland (now Ashland) County, Ohio, in 1824. In 1825 he married Nancy Harnley, and in 1851 he moved to Woodford County, Illinois, with a family of nine children. Apparently he did not unite with the Mennonite Church until about 1840. He died in Woodford County, Illinois, on April 17, 1880, and the funeral services were conducted by Emmanuel Hartman, son of the pioneer German immigrant, Samuel Hartman (1832). See *Herald of Truth,* XVI (June, 1880), 117.

[8] The children of Peter and Mary Brubaker were: Susan, married Henry Roland; Elizabeth, married Nathan Steigerwalt; Maria, wife of John Gongwer; Fannie, married Jacob Barr; Benjamin; Nancy, married William Stauffer; Lydia, deceased before 1892; and Christian. The father, Peter Brubaker (east), son of John Brubaker, was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, married Mary Brubaker in 1818, and in 1823 settled in Milton Township upon the farm on which he died April 21, 1879. His wife died in 1870, aged seventy-five. Peter Brubaker had been a member of the Brethren in Christ Church for about forty-five years (hence since 1834, eleven years after moving to Ashland County).

County with twenty-four bushels of wheat. Seven days were required to make the trip and he received three shillings for the wheat. Game of all kinds was plentiful and the wild hogs that roamed the forest were dangerous when cornered or aroused.

At an early date the Brubakers and their neighbors built a meetinghouse on the east side of Section Thirty-Three about a half mile northwest of Five Points on the east side of the road leading to Paradise Hill. It was later known as "the Mennonite meetinghouse below Paradise Hill." John Nusbaum who later moved to Clinton Township, Elkhart, Indiana, was ordained to the ministry here by Bishop Jacob Nold, of Columbiana County, Ohio. According to a tradition handed down by the Nusbaums, John Nusbaum and Joseph Freed, of Richland County, were ordained at, or about, the same time. Another preacher of the congregation before 1834 was —— Kauffman, possibly John Kauffman or Christian Kauffman, who later served as a deacon in the Brethren in Christ Church.[9] In 1832 two German preachers arrived in the settlement from the Bavarian Palatinate: John Risser, already mentioned, and Peter Beutler. Both of them purchased timber land in the northern part of Vermillion Township five or six miles east of Five Points and five miles south of Ashland. Beutler experienced little difficulty in working with his American brethren, but Risser assumed an attitude of superiority, complained about their narrow views, withdrew after having been virtually forced out, and soon founded a separate Mennonite congregation.

In the immediate vicinity of the meetinghouse near Five Points the membership gradually declined until services were no longer held there. Peter Imhoff, the last bishop, held to the strict Old Order Mennonite practices—no evangelistic services, no Sunday school, no English preaching—and in his declining years held services at his home near Paradise Hill instead of attempting to continue services in the meetinghouse. Some time after the death of his wife in 1889 he returned to Chester Township, Wayne County, and worshiped with the Wisler Mennonite Church at Eight Square until his death in 1893 at the age of eighty-seven.

[9] Two Christian Kauffmans, former residents of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, lived in Richland County, Ohio. One moved to Richland in 1836, and in 1842 moved to Mercer County, Ohio, where he died at the age of 78 yr., 8 mo., and 13 da. Bishop John M. Brenneman of Allen County preached his funeral sermon. The other came to Richland County at an early date, served the Pleasant Grove Brethren in Christ Church as deacon, and died May 1, 1875, at the age of 67 yr., 6 mo., and 1 da.

After the meetinghouse was no longer used for services, tramps, who were still a recognized group in America during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, used the church building as a shelter. They made fire in the old tenplate stoves, boiled coffee and cooked food in tin cans and other crude vessels. But their grossly unsanitary habits and their abuse of the meetinghouse finally led to the sale of the building to Jerry Eby, a member of the United Brethren Church, as an implement shed.

A small plot, also on the farm of Benjamin Brubaker, was set aside as a cemetery. Because in the early years graves were usually marked with rough home-made markers which fell over, sank into the soil, or were lost or misplaced in other ways, the location of none of the very early graves is any longer known. It has not been possible to fix the exact location of the grave of Benjamin Brubaker, Sr. On December 28, 1872, Peter Brubaker, Jr., and his wife, Catharine, sold eleven and one-fourth rods of land "for a burying ground and no other purposes whatsoever." The deed also included a "right of way—horse way, foot way, also for carts, wagons, carriages or any other conveyances." The plot was conveyed to George Brubaker, George Hartman, and Christian Stoner, all of Ashland County, as trustees. George Brubaker was the son of Peter, Jr., and Catharine (Albert) Brubaker; George Hartman, the son of Henry and Barbara (Albert) Hartman, lived about a mile north of the Mennonite meetinghouse north of Five Points. Christian Stoner, probably also a Mennonite and probably a son of John Stoner, was a son-in-law of Henry Hartman. At least two of the trustees were first cousins on the mother's side.[10]

[10] In the small plot, less than three rods wide and four rods long, but neatly kept and carefully fenced, are the following marked graves: Benjamin Newcomer, died 1852; Anna, his wife, d., 1876; Elizabeth, d., 1850; Harriet, daughter of Samuel and Leah Lance, d., October 2, 1848; Elizabeth, wife of John Moyer (Myers), died, April 4, 1838; Peter Brubaker, d., 1877; Catharine (Albert), his wife, d., 1881; their daughter, Elizabeth, d., 1859; their son, Christian, d., 1862; Peter Bechtel (Sr.), d., September 10, 1863, aged 85 yr., 25 da.; Henry Hartman, d., 1871; his wife, Barbara (Albert), d., 1894; John Stoner (1836—1938) and Catharine, his wife (1845—1929), and a few others.

A brief obituary notice of Peter Brubacher's (sic!) death was printed in the *Herald of Truth* (Vol. XIV, p. 31). He died of cancer on January 11, 1877.

Peter Bechtel, Sr., came to Milton Township, Richland County, from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1824 and settled in the southwest quarter of Section Eighteen about five miles northwest of Five Points, but later purchased several tracts nearer Five Points. He was a widower when he came to Richland County, his wife having died in 1822. His twelve-year-old son, Joseph, and probably other children came with him.

Henry Hartman was the son of Peter and Anna (Lengen) Hartman, German Mennonites who lived in Wurtemberg, Germany, and died there in 1834 and 1831, respectively. Henry was born in 1809, came to America as a young man and after

This cemetery, now known as the Whisler Cemetery because the farm was owned by Reverend Samuel Whisler, a son of Reverend David Whisler, is approached by means of a lane running between the house and barn. Samuel Whisler married Susan, the daughter of Peter Brubaker, Jr.[11]

The Brethren in Christ Congregation

The reasons for the ultimate dissolution of the Mennonite congregation in the vicinity of Five Points seems to be related to the rise and growth of the River Brethren, or Brethren in Christ, congregations in Mifflin and Milton townships. Peter Brubaker (east), (1795-1879), the son of John Brubaker, of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is usually given as the first member of that denomination settling in Ashland County. But Hill states that Brubaker had been "a member of that branch of the Tunker Church, known as the River Brethren" for about forty-five years at Chestnut Grove near his home, where he was buried. This might mean that he had left the Mennonite Church in 1834, eleven years after he and his wife moved to Ashland County. It is true, to be sure, that he might not have united with any church before that time. But this seems hardly probable.

Climenhaga, who seems to have secured his data for the early history of the congregation largely from local tradition, states that the first four Brethren in Christ settlers were John Brubaker, a minister, Peter Brubaker, a deacon, Christian Kauffman, a deacon, and Joseph Charles and that the members of the Brethren in Christ first came to this part of Ohio soon after 1840. That the Brethren in Christ first came about 1840 would seem to be correct but he is certainly mistaken in giving 1840 as the date of the settlement of the four above-mentioned. As mentioned above Peter Brubaker came in 1823. John Brubaker was already in Ashland in 1825, John Kauffman in 1827, Henry Rowland in 1834. The latter date is

stopping in Lancaster County for a few years, came to Milton Township in 1840 and married Barbara Albert in 1841.

[11] Samuel Albert (pronounced all-bert) Whisler, a son of the Reverend Samuel Whisler and now living on the old Peter Brubaker, Jr., homestead, gave the writer valuable assistance in collecting material for this history. Albert Whisler was born in 1874. The writer has made free use of the information given him by Mr. Whisler, comparing it carefully with other sources, and then using, interpreting, or rejecting as the facts seemed to warrant. Hence, Mr. Whisler is not to be held responsible for any errors either in facts or interpretation. Before the writer visited Ashland County the last time (in 1943), A. W. Climenhaga's questionnaires had probed records and memories in Brethren in Christ congregations so that Mr. Whisler was ready to give accurate and concise data on many points.

usually given as the approximate date when Peter Brubaker united with the Brethren in Christ.

Climenhaga states further that Henry Hoover at the request of some of his friends came to Ohio from Pennsylvania about 1850. His dates for the first services—1858, 1860, and 1866, with the first love feast at Henry Hoovers about 1862—give further weight to the argument that most of the early Brethren in Christ members in Ashland and Richland counties were Mennonites who changed their membership to the Brethren in Christ Church.

The dates quoted from Climenhaga in the preceding paragraph apparently are too late. He states, for instance, that three ministers from Ashland County: Joseph Eshleman, David Whisler,[12] and John Brubaker were present at revival services held in Wayne County at least as early as 1855 when a certain school teacher, W. O. Baker, in the Paradise community southeast of Smithville was baptized in Sugar Creek.

In Wayne County as in Ashland County some of the foremost leaders in the later years of the history of the Brethren in Christ congregations bore surnames well-known in the local Mennonite churches. The names of two Brethren in Christ ministers in Green Township, Wayne County—Elias Schrock and Samuel Longenecker —bear evidence to their Amish and Mennonite ancestry. Both names were common in the vicinity of Smithville and Orrville. The same holds true of the names of Brethren in Christ ministers in southern Wayne and in Stark County—D. H. Rohrer, Aaron Bechtel, Christian Grabill.

The quietistic—"die Stillen in Lande"—type of religious life and customs of the Mennonites have been conducive to emphasis on the intellectual, practical, ethical aspects of Christianity. Whenever strong leadership was lacking, this emphasis declined and the group slipped into mere formalism. Then they became the easy prey of pietistic groups who emphasized an inner experience, "heart religion," and who substituted the "mourner's bench" for the Book of James.

This seems to have been the fate of the Mennonite Church in Ashland County. In all her nearly three-quarters of a century she

12 The Reverend David Whisler was the father of the Reverend Samuel Whisler who married a daughter of Peter Brubaker, the Mennonite, who is buried in the burial plot now known as the Whisler cemetery. Samuel Whisler eventually acquired title to the property. When the writer visited there in 1943, Samuel's son, Samuel Albert Whisler, was living there with his daughter and her husband.

did not produce a single outstanding preacher. Good men there were, pious men, men whose devotion to the church was unquestioned, but with the possible exception of Bishop Peter Imhoff whose ordination came after much irreparable damage had been done, there was no great preacher of the prophet-leader type. Even so, Peter Imhoff and John Hartman might have been able to hold the remnant together and rebuild the church, but they worked at cross purposes, one standing for the strict Old Order and the other, having lost confidence in the Old, not vigorous enough to promote the new.

At all events there is considerable evidence that the few Brethren in Christ members who moved into the community about 1840 or before invited ministers of their church to hold meetings in their homes. These meetings created considerable stir in Mennonite circles. The Brethren in Christ emphasis on experience and on sanctification gave a new meaning to religion. Then again the strong insistence on baptism by immersion caused some Mennonites to question the validity of their religious faith and practice. A number of the more progressive members of the Mennonite congregation were rebaptized, united with the Brethren in Christ, and became ministers and leaders in that group. Like the Amish and early Mennonites they held services in the homes of members at opposite ends of the community on alternate Sundays—one Sunday in southern Milton Township and the next in northern Mifflin. There is some evidence that, in the beginning, the group in Mifflin was the stronger. But as the Brubakers and Rowlands in Milton Township became active in the organization the center shifted northeastward.

Services continued to be held in the houses and barns of members until 1874 and 1875, when the Chestnut Grove and Pleasant Grove churches were built. The Pleasant Grove Church was built in Mifflin Township, Richland County, on land donated by Christian Kauffman about three and a half miles south of Five Points, and about two miles west of the village of Mifflin. One might gain the impression from Climenhaga's account that this church is still in existence. But it has been abandoned for a number of years. In fact no vestige of the building remains. For nearly twenty years no burials have been made in the cemetery adjoining the church. The cemetery is in a state of neglect and in need of proper enclosure.[13]

[13] This cemetery preserves a mute record of those who helped to found the congregation. The following partial list may be interesting to the genealogist: Andrew Guse, d. 1885; Jacob Markley, d. 1859; Elizabeth, his wife, d. 1851; E. H. Charles

The Chestnut Grove meetinghouse, built in Milton Township in 1874, was destined to become the more important of the two. The church and cemetery are located on two adjoining plots of ground donated respectively by Joseph Charles and Peter Brubaker (east). These two warm friends owned adjoining quarter sections about a mile east of Five Points—the southeast quarter of Section Thirty-Four and the southwest quarter of Section Thirty-Five. Each donated eighty-four square rods on the north side of his farm. They signed a joint deed on February 16, 1874, conveying these plots to Joseph Charles, Peter Brubaker (east)[14] and Christian Kauffman, "trustees of the River Brethren Church."

When the writer visited Ashland County in 1943, the Chestnut Grove Brethren in Christ congregation gave every evidence of being in a prosperous condition. A brief call at the beautiful farm home of the present pastor, a landscape gardener and artist, was a rewarding experience. The farm home of the late Peter Brubaker (east) is a fine old Pennsylvania German homestead with its hundred-year-old brick house and substantial barn. A neat, well-kept lawn, flowers, and shrubbery lend attractiveness and homeyness. The intelligent young housewife, attired in the becoming, stiffly-starched white cap and neat, trim, plain black garb of the Brethren, was conversant with, and interested in, the history of her church and with present trends in its social and religious life and in its participation in the

(1836—), apparently not buried here; Fanny, wife of E. H. Charles, (1838—1921); Maria, wife of E. V. Kendig, M.D., b. July 4, 1844, d. September 8, 1883; Henry Hoover, (possibly a son-in-law of Benjamin Brubaker, Sr.) d. 1887, aged 67; Lydia B[rubaker?], his wife, d. 1884, aged 64; Jacob H. Hoover, 1926; Catharine Hoover, 1926; John Charles, d. 1884, aged 81; Maria, his wife, d. 1877, aged 68; two sisters—Mary A[lbert?] Weaver 1830—1902; and Eliza Charles, 1827—1903; John Kauffman, d. August 10, 1874, aged 73 years, 11 mo. and 10 days; Dr. John Kauffman, d. June 16, 1845, aged 80-9-24; Anna B[rubaker?], (possibly a sister of Benjamin Brubaker, Sr.) wife of John Kauffman, d. Sept. 7, 1849; Maria Kauffman, d. June 26, 1852, aged 39-10-8; Joseph Charles, b. April 16, 1799, d. March 16, 1883, aged 83 years, 11 da.; Elizabeth, his wife, died August 26, 1868, aged 72-1-7; Christian Kauffman, d. May 1, 1875, aged 67-6-1; Anna, his wife, d. March 23, 1896, aged 87-6-13; daughter, Harriet, d. 1844. Four of these, Henry Hoover, John Kauffman, Christian Kauffman, and Joseph Charles are given a prominent place in the history of the Brethren in Christ Church in Ashland County. One of the Kauffmans possibly was a Mennonite minister as late as 1840.

[14] Peter Brubaker, the son of John Brubaker, signed his name "Peter Brubaker (east)" to distinguish him from "Peter Brubaker, Jr.", the son of Benjamin Brubaker, who lived on the northwest quarter of Section Thirty-three, a mile farther west. Apparently Peter Brubaker (east) had never learned to write. He "made his mark." Whenever he signed his name to a legal document, it appeared in the following form:

his
Peter X Brubaker (east). In the earlier years the Brubakers signed their name
mark
Brubacher.

Civilian Public Service program. And it was at the former home of the pioneer, Benjamin Brubaker, that the writer enjoyed a chat with Albert (pronounced all-bert) Whisler, the great-grandson of Benjamin Brubaker and one of the first trustees of the Chestnut Grove Cemetery Association.

In 1919 Henry Roland and Mary A. Roland his wife, who had acquired title to the Peter Brubaker (east) farm donated an additional eighty rods of land east of the original cemetery plot to the trustees of the Chestnut Grove Brethren in Christ Church. In 1923, probably following the decline of the Pleasant Grove congregation, the Chestnut Grove congregation decided to set up a separate trusteeship for the cemetery. On December 29, 1929, Henry Roland, Daniel Brubaker and S. A. Whisler, trustees of the "Church of the Brethren in Christ," conveyed the entire cemetery plot of 164 square rods to the trustees of the "Chestnut Grove Cemetery Association": Henry Roland, D. J. Brubaker, S[amuel] A[lbert] Whisler, Charles Urban, and Edward Hiller.[15]

According to Climenhaga the first three overseers—that is, bishops—were Joseph Hershey, David Whisler, Sr., and B. F. Hoover. Other ministers besides these and John Brubaker, were David Whisler, Christian Roland, Henry Roland, and Daniel Kohler. Some of the deacons were Peter Brubaker (east), Christian Kauffman, Nathan Steigerwald, Benjamin Brubaker, Philip Baum, and David Brubaker. The two Rolands and Steigerwald were sons-in-law of Peter Brubaker (east). David Whisler came from Stark County where he had buried his first wife. Some of the Rolands also came from Stark County in the vicinity of the Mennonite Church which bore the name of the Mennonite minister, David Roland, thus indicating again a growth in Brethren in Christ membership at the expense of the Mennonite group. Hill records that Christian Roland came to Ohio with his parents in 1833 and settled in Milton Town-

[15] Following are some of the records preserved on the tombstones in the Chestnut Grove Cemetery. The type of gravestone, by the way, indicates that the congregation in some respects is becoming "secularized" to use a modern term for the earlier, well-understood word, "worldly." Tobias Eby, b. August 4, 1817, d. May 20, 1851; his wife, Mary Eby Landis, b. Jan. 1, 1823, d. March 19, 1900; Peter Brubaker [east], d. April 21, 1879, aged 84-1-28; Mary, his wife, d. November 7, 1869, aged 71-7-13; Rev. David Whisler, d. August 4, 1877, aged 62-1-21; P. Hoover, d. December 21, 1877, aged 88-6-14; Catherine, his wife, d. April 26, 1882, aged 83-2-12; Christian Roland, d. May 23, 1876, aged 53-3-27; Mary, his wife, d. August 19, 1905, aged 82-10-25; John Eby, d. February 11, 1898, aged 77-7-17; Martha Hiller, his wife, d. April 16, 1901, aged 79-7-13; "Reverend Bishop Benjamin F. Hoover," b. August 30, 1847, d. July 20, 1934; Mary C., his wife, b. April 1, 1848, d. March 8, 1935. Rev. Samuel Whisler, 1844—1926; his wife Susan Brubaker Whisler, 1846—1908.

ship. He married Mary Brubaker in 1844. Hill records also that Samuel Roland, son of Joseph and Christina (Lane) Roland, was born near Hagerstown, Maryland, on March 29, 1802, and that his parents moved to Orange Township, Ashland County, in 1818, traveling the two hundred miles or more in wagons.

Although the exact details can no longer be ascertained, it seems undoubtedly true that the Brethren in Christ congregation was built up right in the heart of the early Mennonite immigration and that the Brethren membership was composed almost wholly of people with a Mennonite background if not of actual Mennonite membership. The Mennonite settlement suffered not only the loss of actual members and their children who were at least potential members, but the general unrest created by the aggressive program of the River Brethren was, directly or indirectly, the cause of the removal of many families to Ohio counties farther west and, after 1840, to Elkhart County, Indiana, and points in other western states.

The Mennonite group lost members not only to the River Brethren but also to the United Brethren who had an aggressive evangelistic program and in addition a broad doctrinal basis which furnished a common meeting ground for people of varying views on nonconformity in such matters as dress and political activity and on the highly controversial subject of baptism. A United Brethren in Christ congregation sprang up in Milton Township at an early date but they do not seem to have erected a meetinghouse until after 1850. On August 20, 1858, Jacob Cotner conveyed a plot of ground forty-eight feet east and west by eighty feet north and south to Nathan Hagenbaugh and Jacob Crider (no doubt earlier Kreider), trustees of the United Brethren in Christ Church. On January 24, 1861, Lydia Courts (or Corts) conveyed the south half of a plot, already used as a burying ground, to Israel Stealy, Joseph Bechtel, Nathan Hagenbuch and Jacob Baum. This plot was about half way between Five Points and Paradise Hill.

Hill states that Joseph Bechtel joined the United Brethren Church about 1858. He was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on August 28, 1811, and came to Milton Township with his father, Peter Bechtel, Sr., certainly a Mennonite, in 1824. As stated above, Peter Bechtel located in the southeast quarter of Section Eighteen about four miles northwest of Five Points.

How serious was the defection to the United Brethren Church the writer does not know, but Bechtel, Stealy and Baum were Mennonite names. The United Brethren "mourner's bench" probably claimed others also. Several families on the road between Paradise Hill and Olivesburg living in fine old Lancaster County homesteads told the writer in 1943 that the United Brethren denomination had made serious inroads on the Mennonite membership during the last century.

Thus the center of the early Mennonite settlement entirely lost its Mennonite character. After the first decade of the settlement in the vicinity of Five Points, in southern Milton and northern Mifflin Mennonite immigrants continued to pour into Ashland (then Richland) County. The newer arrivals took up the uncleared lands farther east and southeast in the northern part of Vermillion Township and to the north beyond Paradise Hill and Olivesburg in the northern part of Milton Township or even farther north in Clear Creek Township.

At first these scattered settlers were all members of a single congregation holding services in the homes of members, probably alternating between Milton and Mifflin in the beginning and later an occasional service in Vermillion. The development of the Brethren in Christ group in the heart of the settlement seems to have had the effect of separating the Mennonites into a Vermillion Township group extending eastward seven or eight miles from Five Points and a northern Milton Township group. Although they continued to worship together, at least until 1870 when the Funk-Wisler schism in Elkhart County divided the progressives and the Old Order, the group in Vermillion gradually became more progressive while the northern group under the leadership of Bishop Peter Imhoff retained the strict Old Order until only Imhoff and his family were left. Then he moved to Wayne County where some of his descendants are members of the Old Order Mennonite Church in Chester Township. The following Ashland County Mennonite families moved to Wayne County and are buried in the Eight Square Cemetery: Joshua and Anna (Imhoff) Begly; Preacher Peter Imhoff and family, John Imhoff and family, Henry and Catherine (Imhoff) Gable and family, Henry P. Imhoff and family, and Bishop Peter Imhoff and son Christian.

APPENDIX A

1823 Peter Brubaker, one mile east of Five Points. This is the present location of the Brethren in Christ (Chestnut Grove) Cemetery.

1824 Peter Bechtel, Sr., five miles northwest of Five Points.

1824 Benjamin Hershey, three and one-half miles east of Five Points—the home of the late Wes. Reed who gave the writer valuable assistance in collecting the material for this history. Benjamin Hershey was living here in 1826 when he purchased two tracts of land two miles south and two and one-half miles southeast of Five Points.

1825 John Brubaker, three miles southwest of Five Points. In 1831 he purchased a quarter section in western Richland County about three miles southeast of Galion in the Richland-Crawford Mennonite Settlement.

1826 Jacob Stemen from Henry Brubaker, one and one half miles south of Five Points paying two thousand dollars for thirty acres. This probably included a mill, later known as Staman's mill.

1826 Jacob Lichty from Henry and Nancy Brubaker two miles southeast of Five Points. (On January 6, 1847, a certain Jacob Lichty purchased sixteen acres in Seneca County about three miles west of Isaac Rohrer's farm. Lichty's purchase was near the Old School Baptist Church.)

1827 John Hershey, two small tracts five and six miles south of Five Points.

1827 John Nusbaum (probably the John Nusbaum, later ordained preacher) one half mile north of Five Points. Five years later he sold it to his brother, Peter Nussbaum. This is probably the farm where the latter died and was buried in the year 1853 at the age of fifty-one.

1827 John Kauffman from Henry Hout four or five miles southwest of Five Points and about two miles northwest of the Brethren in Christ Pleasant Grove Cemetery. He is buried in this cemetery. (This is "Dr." John Kauffman. His fifth child, Daniel, born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, married Linda, the fifth child of Leonard and Elizabeth Croninger on March 25, 1841. They lived in Ashland County. Daniel Kauffman was a millwright.)

1828 Peter Bechtel (Sr.?) two miles north of Five Points.

1828 Benjamin Brubaker, Jr., from Benjamin Brubaker, Sr., and his wife Magdalene, 160 acres one half mile west of Five Points. He paid $1200. This is where Benjamin Brubaker built a brick house, probably in 1833. In 1850 he and his wife Catharine sold it to John Lutz for $5500.

1828 John Landis from Benjamin Brubaker (Sr.?) one half mile south and one mile east of Five Points. Landis may have been a son-in-law.

1829 Joseph Showalter, 142½ acres, from United States, eighteen miles southwest of Five Points.

1830 Peter Brubaker (usually called Jr. to distinguish him from his cousin Peter (east), about three miles northwest of Five Points.

1830 Isaac Kagey from Christian Kagey, 161 acres one and one half miles south of Five Points. (A certain Martin Keagy, born in Shenandoah County, Va., came to Mifflin Township in 1825, purchased a farm in 1827 and died in Mifflin Township, August 8, 1884. He married Nancy Charles on January 8, 1829. See **Herald of Truth,** XXI (September 1, 1884), 268. A certain Benjamin Bally assisted in the funeral services.

1830 Samuel Lance, five miles northeast of Five Points. In 1833 he purchased another quarter section about a mile farther east.

1831 Christian Rowland purchased Lot 37 in Ashland for $50. His executor sold it on March 4, 1837, for $525. Ten years later it sold for $900.

1831 John Newcomer from Jacob Frick five miles south of Five Points (two miles south of Pleasant Grove).

1832 John Krider 160 acres three miles east of Ashland.

1834 and 1837 Samuel Ziegler and his wife Barbara about two miles northeast of Five Points.

1834 Joseph Hochstetler, four miles south of Five Points.

1834 Henry Rowland (later a Brethren in Christ minister) two miles east of Five Points and one mile east of the present Brethren in Christ Chestnut Grove Church. He paid nearly ten dollars an acre.

1834 John Brubaker, later a Brethren in Christ minister, two miles east and one half mile south of Five Points—hence adjoining Henry Rowland.

1835 Israel Staley from Christian Nusbaum two miles north of Five Points. (A Henry Staley, born in Ashland County, April 8, 1849, moved to Elkhart County, Indiana in 1858, married Lovina Rarick, and was a member of the Prairie Street Mennonite Congregation.)

1835 Jacob Baum about two miles north of Five Points. Philip Baum was a Brethren in Christ deacon.

1835 Michael Smeltzer from John Taylor, one and one half miles northwest of Five Points. (John, the son of Michael and Susan (Rhodes) Smeltzer, was born in Manor Township, Lancaster County, Pa., November 26, 1823. He married Leah Lechlitner in Ashland County. In 1843 he moved to Elkhart County, Indiana. His brother Henry, born in 1825 was only six months old when his parents moved to Ashland County in 1826. Henry married Elizabeth Yoder in Elkhart County, Indiana.)

1836 Jacob Brubaker, about five acres a little over two miles northwest of Five Points. (In 1831 a Jacob Brubaker purchased three acres in northern Crawford County and in 1851 a Jacob Brubaker was living in Wood County when he purchased forty acres for $445.)

1837 Jacob W. Reed from Benjamin Kauffman and Susanna, his wife, about three miles southeast of Five Points.

1838 Samuel Brubaker from Samuel Eby, two miles west and three miles south of Five Points.

1839 Henry Hartman, from Samuel Myers fifteen acres, four miles south of Five Points.

1839 Joseph Kornhouse **(sic.)** three miles west and two miles south of Five Points. A certain Joseph Kornhaus died at Sterling, Illinois, at an advanced age on November 29, 1889. He had been twice married, his second wife and all of his children preceding him in death. Eighteen grandchildren and twenty-five great-grandchildren survived him. (Henry Kornhaus, father of Bishop Adam Kornhaus, also lived in Ashland County for a short time. He moved southeast of Orrville in Wayne County in 1844. He died there in 1883.)

1844 John Smeltzer, one and one half miles north of Five Points.

1845 Henry Hibsman (Hibschman), 5½ acres about 8½ miles southwest of Five Points.

1846 Peter Brubaker, Jr., from Benjamin Brubaker, the northeast quarter of Section Thirty-Three in Milton Township, "the old Benjamin Brubaker homestead," on which the Mennonite meetinghouse stood. This also is the location of the "Brubaker Cemetery," now called the Whisler Cemetery, where Peter Brubaker, Jr., and his wife are buried.

1846 Henry Hartman from Jacob Bechtel, thirty-two acres one mile north of Five Points.

1846 Peter Brubaker, Jr., from Jacob Bechtel **et al.** less than a mile north of Five Points.

1846 Mary Burk from Jacob Bechtel **et al.,** one mile north of Five Points. Because the names of some of the signers of this deed have been found nowhere else they are given here. An X between the names indicates that the signer made his mark instead of writing his name. Jacob Bechtel, Anne Bechtel, John Myers, Jr., Michael X Gongawar, Catharine X Gongawar, John X Myers, Sr., Henry Hartman, Barbara Hartman, Abraham Myers, Susan X Myers, Nancy Newcomer, Peter Brubaker, Catharine Brubaker, William Hircher (or Hirshler), Elizabeth X Hircher (or Kircher.) This deed seems to have been given in connection with settling a Moyer (Myers) estate. Jacob Bechtel, the son of Peter and Sophia Bechtel, married Anna Moyer.

1851 Samuel Landis from Henry Brubaker, two miles south and three miles west of Five Points. (A certain David Eshleman, son of Joseph and Margaret Eshleman, born February 24, 1843, moved to Ashland County in 1864 and on June 20, 1867, married Harriet, the daughter of Samuel and Christina Landis.)

1853 Isaac Eby from Jacob Eby, about three and one half miles south of Five Points. (The name was pronounced a-by.)

ATTENDANCE AT MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, 1943-44

SILAS HERTZLER

Attendance in Mennonite schools and colleges has, on the whole, gradually increased since 1928, when this annual compilation of statistics was first begun. However, for several years the short term Bible schools have not been included in the study, hence the grand total has since that time not quite reached what it was in 1936-37.

In examining attendance trends it should be pointed out that attendance of academy or high school students has increased rather markedly since the war began in 1941. On the college level there was a drop of fifty-seven students over the school year 1942-43. The drop in college students has been marked and continuous since the year 1940-41, with the coming of national conscription. Mennonite college men are now almost all in Civilian Public Service camps, or in some other form of government service. The men in college at this time are those rejected for military service, boys under eighteen, and men preparing for the ministry.

Fifteen institutions sent reports for the school year 1943-44. Grace Bible Institute in Omaha, Nebraska, is added to the list of schools previously reporting, though the Corn Bible School and Academy, of Corn, Oklahoma, this year is not included, because of lack of information. The schools sending statistical information for the school year 1943-44 are as follows:

Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas
Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio
Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Virginia
Freeman Junior College, Freeman, South Dakota
German-English Academy, Rosthern, Saskatchewan
Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana
Grace Bible Institute, Omaha, Nebraska
Hesston College and Bible School, Hesston, Kansas
Immanuel Bible School, Reedley, California
Lancaster Mennonite School, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Manitoba
Oklahoma Bible Academy, Meno, Oklahoma
Tabor Bible School, Dalmeny, Saskatchewan
Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas
Zoar Academy and Bible School, Inman, Kansas

The fifteen institutions included in the study are arranged in Table I, so that the schools with the largest attendance are given first. This is true even when there are very few college students in a school. Tables II and III are arranged so that together, for each school, the totals given are the same as the total in Table I for that school. The footnotes give the necessary explanatory notes and other details, when these are not otherwise evident.

A definite trend in the direction of graduate work in Bible is shown by the fact that the Th.B. at Goshen now requires five years beyond the completion of high school. In other words, a three year Bible school approximating a seminary has been organized, with Harold S. Bender as dean. Two years of general college work are required for admission to this theological seminary, followed by three years of exclusively Biblical and theological work. The year 1943-44 also marked the beginning of the Grace Bible Institute in Omaha, Nebraska, which is a Bible school of college grade for the training of Mennonite ministers and other church workers.

The fifteen branches of Mennonites tabulated in Table IV seems large. Just one student is listed as an "independent" Mennonite, and seven are merely given as Mennonites, the particular group being unspecified. Three groups of Amish Mennonites are included, though students in these groups attend at only three schools, and the number in each case is small. Ninety-three per cent of the total represents three Mennonite bodies, with only seven per cent coming from the other twelve groups.

The non-Mennonite group is larger than in some previous years largely because the summer school, academy and music students were left untabulated at one school. Some of these students undoubtedly are Mennonites, but detailed information was not available. Twenty-seven Christian denominations, other than Mennonites, are included in the student body at the fifteen schools. These details are shown in Table V.

Mennonites in the student body come from twenty-nine states, from the District of Columbia, from five provinces of Canada and from three foreign countries. Since the opening of the Lancaster Mennonite School, Pennsylvania has always had the largest student attendance. This year Kansas has students in six different schools, while Pennsylvania is represented in but five institutions. Table VII gives non-Mennonites by states, provinces and countries. The totals

in Tables VI and VII again, for the schools represented, equal the totals in Table I.

Tables VIII and IX list Mennonite students in detail, one table giving college students, and the other those in high school. For lack of space no separate tables of non-Mennonites are given. Table X shows that 405 were in attendance during the summer of 1943, at four colleges. This includes duplicates with the regular school year. Summer students, not counting duplicates, are given in all the other tables where these details are required.

Because one school did not tabulate men and women separately it is not possible to get the exact proportions of men and of women in attendance. Counting the fourteen schools for which this information is available, Table XI shows that only about 38% of the students are men, and 62% are women. For college students the proportion of women is higher than this indicates, for the boys in high school have usually not yet reached the draft age.

Table XII is a tabulation of totals for the sixteen years that this study has been made. By examining these statistics one can easily determine trends for the various years in Mennonite and non-Mennonite students. Totals of college students, as compared with the number who have not finished high school, also are easily available.

Table XIII shows that eight different bachelor's degrees were conferred by the five schools that grant degrees. Six of these eight degrees were conferred at separate schools, with only two bachelor's degrees being given at more than one college each. Twelve other diplomas and certificates, of both college and high school grade, were given in eleven different schools.

Table I

TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES 1943-44

School	College	Academy	Bible	Other Departments	Total Enrollment
Goshen College	468		84[1]	4[2]	556
Eastern Mennonite School	86	236	100	86[3]	508
Bethel College	270	46		82[4]	398
Hesston College and Bible School	45	200	36[5]	22[3]	303
Bluffton College	141			61[6]	202
German-English Academy	41	127[7]			168
Lancaster Mennonite School		166			166
Tabor College	137	27			164
Mennonite Collegiate Institute	37	99			136
Freeman Junior College	19	88			107
Oklahoma Bible Academy		80[8]			80
Immanuel Bible School		51[9]			51
Grace Bible Institute	40[11]				40
Zoar Academy and Bible School		22			22
Tabor Bible School		19[9]			19
Total	1284	1161	220	255	2920

1 82 Six-weeks Bible term students, 2 part-time Bible students.
2 Music and art students.
3 Correspondence students not of college grade.
4 Music students, not of college grade.
5 Bible term students for six weeks.
6 Music and art students not of college grade.
7 39 High school Bible students.
8 15 Bible students.
9 Bible academy students.
10 78 Summer relief workers in training; 12 correspondence students..
11 Presumed that all have graduated from high school.

Table II

ENROLLMENT BY CLASSES, COLLEGE STUDENTS, MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES 1943-44

College	Post Graduates	Seniors	Juniors	Sophomores	Freshmen	Special	Summer	Other Depts.	Total
Goshen	13	45	30	61	89	29[1]	115	86[2]	468[3]
Bethel	4	26	29	37	69	23	82[6]		270
Bluffton		22	12	25	46	10	26[6]		141
Tabor		10	14	29	48	17	19[6]		137
Eastern Menn. School		2	7	28	44	5			86
Hesston			1	5	33	2		4[4]	45
German-English Academy					41				41
Grace Bible Institute								40[5]	40
Menn. Collegiate Inst.					37				37
Freeman				4	15				19
Total	17	105	93	189	422	86	242	130	1284

1 17 Part-time students, 12 correspondence students.
2 8 Extension students, 78 M.C.C. Relief Worker's Training School students.
3 Not quite all Relief Training School students were high school graduates.
4 Extension students.
5 Detailed statistics not given. Theological students.
6 Exclusive of duplicates.

Table III

ENROLLMENT BY CLASSES, STUDENTS NOT OF COLLEGE GRADE, MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES 1943-44

School	High School Classes					Other Depts.	Total
	Seniors	Juniors	Sopho-mores	Freshmen	Bible		
Eastern Mennonite School	55	75	50	56	100[9]	86[1]	422
Hesston	52	49	45	48[2]	36[3]	28[4]	258
Lancaster	35	42	40	49			166
Bethel	2	8	9	23		86[5]	128
German-English Academy		50	42	35			127
Mennonite Collegiate Inst.		50	34	15			99
Freeman	20	16	21	30		1[6]	88
Goshen					84	4[7]	88
Oklahoma	8	18	29	24		1[6]	80
Bluffton						61[8]	61
Immanuel			16	30		5[6]	51
Tabor College	9	8	9	1			27
Zoar			11	11			22
Tabor Bible		5		14			19
Total	181	321	306	336	220	272	1636

1 Correspondence students.
2 4 Full-time Bible students.
3 Six-weeks Bible term students.
4 5 Special students, 22 correspondence students not of college age, 1 deferred student.
5 4 Special students, 82 music students not of college grade.
6 Special students.
7 Music students.
8 Music and art students not of college grade.
9 Bible term students for six weeks.

Table IV

MENNONITE STUDENTS IN MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES 1943-44

Denomination	E. M. S.	Goshen	Hesston	Bethel	Lancaster	Ger. Eng.	Tabor	M. C. I.	Freeman	Bluffton	Oklahoma	Immanuel	Grace Bible	Zoar	Tabor Bible	Total
(Old) Mennonites	465	380	268	3	155	1	..	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	1276
General Conference	..	40	15	164	..	151	9	65	79	81	74	..	22	2	1	703
Mennonite Breth.	..	7	..	2	..	9	100	65	7	..	..	49	1	2	12	254
Krimmer Menn. Breth.	2	2	..	1	..	..	23	..	11	..	..	2	..	18	..	59
Evan. Menn. Breth.	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	..	2	..	..	..	9	..	6	26
Conservative Amish	23	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23
Central Conference	..	7	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	..	..	..	..	..	16
Amish Mennonite	7	1	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Menn. Breth. in Christ	..	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Defenseless Mennonites	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	..	..	..	..	..	8
Menn. Unclassified	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	7
Weavertown Amish	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Swiss Mennonite	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Independent	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Reformed Mennonites	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	501	448	284	170[1]	166	161	141	133	102	101	77	51	32	22	19	2408

1 Summer students not included.

Table V

NON-MENNONITE STUDENTS IN MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

1943-44

	Bethel	Goshen	Bluffton	Tabor	Hesston	Grace Bible	E. M. S.	Ger.-Eng.	Freeman	M. C. I.	Oklahoma	Total
Not given	212[1]	6	14	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	3[2]	239
Methodist	6	28	22	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	58
Non Church members	..	9	..	7	9	..	4	..	..	..	..	29
Brethren	..	20	4	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	27
Presbyterian	3	9	12	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	26
Evangelical	..	6	10	3	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	23
Baptist	1	2	3	8	..	4	..	..	..	1	..	19
Lutheran	..	5	2	..	1	..	..	2	5	1	..	16
United Brethren	..	1	9	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Brethren in Christ	..	8	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	9
Congregational	1	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Roman Catholic	1	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Chr. Missionary Alliance	..	..	3	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	6
7th Day Adventist	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	5
Church of Christ	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Christian	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Congregational Christian	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Episcopal	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Interdenominational	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
Church of God	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Nazarene	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Friends	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Greek Catholic	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Holiness	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Reformed	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Reformed Evangelical	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Salvation Army	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Union	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
United Presbyterian	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	228	108	101	23	19	8	7	7	5	3	3	512

[1] Statistics not given for 210 summer, academy, and music students.

[2] Details not given.

Table VI

States, Provinces and Countries from which Mennonite Students Come, Mennonite Schools and Colleges, 1943-44

	E. M. S.	Goshen	Hesston	Bethel	Lancaster	German English	Tabor	M. C. I.	Freeman	Bluffton	Oklahoma	Immanuel	Grace	Zoar	Tabor Bible	Total
Pennsylvania	199	41	3	..	165	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	418
Kansas	..	36	105	117	..	..	75	..	..	..	7	..	..	22	..	362
Ohio	33	99	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	68	..	..	..	..	..	212
Indiana	15	158	16	1	..	..	..	..	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	197
Virginia	166	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	170
Saskatchewan	..	..	..			128	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	151
Manitoba	..	1	..	..	..	3	..	116	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	120
South Dakota	..	..	..	4	..	..	2	..	100	..	..	..	..	..	..	106
Oklahoma	..	..	4	11	..	..	14	..	..	..	67	..	..	..	..	96
California	..	2	..	6	..	..	16	..	..	..	..	51[2]	..	..	..	75
Iowa	7	23	31	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	63
Illinois	1	41	4	2	..	..	..	..	..	7	..	..	..	..	..	55
Oregon	1	..	38	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	42
Maryland	35	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	39
Unknown	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	32[3]	..	..	35
Michigan	7	6	11	..	..	..	1	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	28
Minnesota	..	2	5	9	..	..	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
Nebraska	..	4	11	5	..	..	4	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	25
Ontario	3	4	..	..	..	11	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24
Alberta	..	..	1	..	..	15	1	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
Colorado	..	4	13	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
North Dakota	..	2	5	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
New York	11	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Idaho	..	3	7	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	16
Missouri	..	1	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Montana	1	2	2	4	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	12
Delaware	7	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10
British Columbia	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
New Jersey	6	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Texas	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	..	6
North Carolina	3	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Argentina	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Florida	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Washington	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Dist. of Columbia	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Arkansas	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Paraguay	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wisconsin	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	501	448	284	170[1]	166	161	141	133	102	101	77	51	32	22	19	2408

1 College students only, 1943-44.

2 Presumed that all students are from California.

3 Statistics not given.

Table VII

STATES, PROVINCES, AND COUNTRIES FROM WHICH NON-MENNONITE STUDENTS COME, MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, 1943-44

	Bethel	Goshen	Bluffton	Tabor	Hesston	Grace	E. M. S.	Ger.-Eng.	Freeman	M. C. I.	Oklahoma	Total
Not Given	211	..	..	..	..	8	2	..	..	..	..	221[2]
Ohio	..	3	94	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	97
Indiana	..	85	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	87
Kansas	16	1	..	15	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	43
Pennsylvania	..	7	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	8
Saskatchewan	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	7
South Dakota	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	6
Colorado	..	1	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Oklahoma	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	4
Oregon	..	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
California	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Manitoba	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	3
Michigan	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Virginia	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	3
West Virginia	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Maryland	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
North Dakota	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Alberta	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Arizona	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Arkansas	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
District of Columbia	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Hawaii	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Illinois	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Minnesota	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Missouri	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Montana	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
New York	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Utah	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wyoming	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	228	108	101	23	19	8	7	7	5	3	3	512

[1] Including only the Academic year 1943-44.

[2] Statistics not given for 210 summer, academy and music students.

Table VIII

Mennonite Students of College Grade, Mennonite Schools and Colleges, 1943-44

School	Men	Women	Total
Goshen	167	189	364[3]
Bethel	46	124	170[1]
Tabor	30	69	99[1]
E. M. S.	34	54	88
Bluffton	26	41	67[1]
Hesston	12	33	45
German-English	20	21	41
M. C. I.	17	19	36
Grace	..	..	32[2]
Freeman	3	12	15
Total	355	662	957

[1] Not including summer school students
[2] Detailed statistics not given.
[3] Detailed statistics not given for 8 students.

Table IX

Mennonite Students Not of College Grade, Mennonite Schools and Colleges, 1943-44

School	Men	Women	Total
E. M. S.	153	260	413
Hesston	94	145	239
Lancaster	57	109	166
German-English	58	62	120
M. C. I.	52	45	97
Freeman	41	46	87
Goshen	45	39	84
Oklahoma	..	..	74[1]
Immanuel	23	28	51
Bethel	25	21	46[2]
Tabor	6	20	26[2]
Bluffton	10	15	25[2]
Zoar	12	10	22
Tabor Bible	4	15	19
Total	580	815	1469

[1] Detailed statistics not given.
[2] Not including summer school students.

Table X

SUMMER SESSION, 1943, MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

School	Men	Women	Total
Goshen	81	119	200
Bethel	27	92	119
Bluffton	23	41	64
Tabor	4	18	22
Total	135	270	405[1]

[1] These statistics include duplicates with the regular school year.

Table XI

TOTAL ATTENDANCE, MEN AND WOMEN, MENNONITE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, 1943-44

School	Men	Women	Total
Goshen	253	303	556
E. M. S.	191	317	508
Bethel	102	296	398
Hesston	116	187	303
Bluffton	69	133	202
German-English	83	85	168
Lancaster	57	109	166
Tabor	42	122	164
M. C. I.	71	65	136
Freeman	45	62	107
Oklahoma	..	..	80[1]
Immanuel	23	28	51
Grace Bible	9	31	40
Zoar	12	10	22
Tabor Bible	4	15	19
Total	1077	1763	2920

[1] Detailed statistics not given.

Table XII

Comparative Enrollment Statistics, 1928-1944

Year	Mennonite	Non-Mennonite	College	Academy	Bible	Other Depts.	Total
1928-29	1025	513	847	569	...	122	1538
1929-30	1259	708	1085	609	...	273	1967
1930-31	1515	665	1234	710	110	126	2180
1931-32	1337	591	944	522	259	203	1928
1932-33	1135	538	906	416	277	74	1673
1933-34	1259	476	921	348	402	64	1735
1934-35	1742	530	1025	550	502	195	2272
1935-36	2274	574	1151	1050	470	177	2848
1936-37	2640	496	1242	948	800	146	3136
1937-38	2258	680	1431	821	542	144	2938
1938-39	2221	586	1447	690	530	140	2807
1939-40	2164	628	1560	808	308	116	2792
1940-41	2101	608	1581	688	343	97	2709
1941-42	2218	600	1494	887	294	143	2818
1942-43	2536	424	1341	1063	383	173	2960
1943-44	2408	512	1284	1161	220	255	2920

Table XIII

Diplomas Given and Degrees Granted, Mennonite Schools and Colleges, 1943-44

Title	Goshen	Bethel	Bluffton	Tabor	E. M. S.	Hesston	Freeman	Ger.-Eng.	M. C. I.	Tabor Bible	Oklahoma	Immanuel	Zoar	Total
Th. B.[1]	7	..	..	4	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
B. A.	43	25	27	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	102
B. S. in Education	21	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
B. S. in Home Economics	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
B. of Music	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
B. S. in Nursing	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
B. R. E.	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
B. S. in Comm. and Econ.	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Junior College	..	..	..	4	5	11	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	29
Two year normal	5	..	..	8	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Junior College Bible	1	..	..	..	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Two yr. Diploma in Theology	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Christian workers	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
One year college	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38	..	..	..	..	..	38
One year normal	..	..	..	..	..	..	26	..	..	..	..	..	..	26
One year Secretarial	12	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Academy	..	..	..	10	54	51	19	..	30	..	..	..	..	164
Elementary Bible (3 yrs.)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	6	1	..	..	13
Elementary Bible (2 yrs.)	..	..	..	..	10	..	..	..	..	..	2	15	10	37
Winter Bible School Diplomas	3	..	..	..	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Total	94	32	32	41	86	64	58	44	30	6	3	15	10	515

[1] Goshen gives a five-year degree, others four-year.

BOOK REVIEWS

Die Geschichte der Grafschaft Ebenfeld. 3. und 4. Buch By JACOB H. JANZEN, Selbst-Verlag (Waterloo, Ontario) 1944, pp. 192, 194.

Mennonite achievement in the field of creative writing is a scarce article. There are rather obvious reasons for this. The artistic impulse is an inherited value, but it can never flower into meritorious creative expression without the experience of beauty in form. For the manual arts, Nature herself supplies the perfect forms; and cultural isolation is not as great a handicap as it is in the field of literary art where good form comes only after wide reading, analysis and practice.

The beginnings of the Mennonite Church are rooted in the Reformation. In common with the other reformers our church leaders condemned the whole field of art as a popish manifestation. Literary interest was limited to the Bible and edificatory writing. In the main this attitude can still be said to prevail. It is only among those who have had the advantage of higher education that we see any break in this tradition. The present surge of interest in higher education will hasten this process, but the art of writing requires maturity of experience, and for some time yet the people who can be productive in this field will come from the preacher-teacher element; their calling forced them out of the limits of their cultural heritage in the days when there were no Mennonite colleges.

We have an example of this in our Mennonite brother, Bishop Jacob H. Janzen of Waterloo, Ontario (General Conference). He is one of a very small number of our people who have developed beyond the stage of imitative writing in which most of us still are and will remain, to the level of creative writing. I say this because in my judgment, after reading several of his early writings, the work I am now reviewing shows that he has developed a style of his own; he has succeeded in expressing his personality in his writing; he has become unique. This is an achievement few people attain. I think he would be first to admit that without his knowledge of German literature this would have been impossible.

Bishop Janzen is one of the Russian Mennonites who migrated to Canada during the great revolution. His language is German. The gratifying aspect of most of his writing is that it is done on Mennonite subjects. It is wrong to suppose that the history of our people is void of material on which to base interesting writing. Our history is packed with momentous events fraught with pathos fit for either drama, poetry or prose. Janzen has tried all of these forms but personally I believe he does his best work in prose.

Bishop Janzen writes from experience. This has always been an essential for enduring literature, recognized by no less a man than the great Goethe himself whose writings were all "personal confessions." In his *Aus Meinem Leben* (*Out of My Life*) written in 1919, Janzen explains his urge to write in these words: "What is it however that forces me again and again to raise the veil of the past, to inquire into causes, to study characters, to hold fast for posterity what I have seen . . . ? It

seems to me it is the dear Lord's will. He has always led me in this direction, and has always pointed His holy finger and said: 'Behold'—and then I saw how what I beheld took form in me as an impression. These impressions kept piling up and irresistibly urged to be expressed. I had to and have to; that is the 'categorical imperative' as I feel it function in me."

What I had in my possession of *Die Geschichte der Grafschaft Ebenfeld* (*The History of the County of Ebenfeld*) for the purpose of this review was one copy in paper cover characterized as "book 3," 1944, and one copy of similar format labeled "book 4," 1944. Taken together these two booklets make up a calendar of daily readings for the whole year of 1944. A third book was sent to me later after I discovered that part of the story was missing, and this is actually in calendar style format with the title *Christlicher Wandkalender,* 1943 (*Christian Wall Calendar,* 1943). This multiplicity of formats and inner form is rather confusing and the difference in title no less so. Obviously it is all one series of episodes. It would be gratifying to see this work published in standard book form. The proof-reading is another item to be improved on.

This history is really not an historical novel that develops a plot in the customary way. We have here rather a series of episodes in the lives of typical individuals of a rural Mennonite community, told in a sort of chronological pattern although the element of time is rather vague. These episodes are a combination of truth and fiction, not objectively related but very definitely for a purpose. The teaching element, however, is not objectionable, it is more the natural resultant, a natural fruit without which the episode itself would be incomplete and the whole lose force. In fact it is this didactic element that gives the whole work unity.

This history is definitely Christian in content and spirit. It is an explanation of the Christian "way" from a hundred different practical approaches. The reader is impressed often by the depth of spiritual insight, and one has the feeling that here is a man who has been perfected in the crucible of experience.

No work of this length, of course, can be perfect. Now and again the narrative becomes a bit thin. A certain amount can be overlooked if the whole leaves a good impression. A translation in English would be worthwhile. It is a history that one is reluctant to lay down unfinished and that one cannot read without being affected by it. This is my personal testimony.

Although this is supposed to be a Canadian story, between the lines we clearly see the steppes of Russia. In a letter of January 29, 1945, Bishop Janzen writes: "In writing my episodes for the calendar leaves, I had my difficulties. They had to be more true to life than pure fiction, and at the same time I had to veil the characters so that no one would recognize the people behind them. Furthermore, my experiences were made in Europe while my daily episode should throw light in the lives of Americans and Canadians. This made it necessary for me to disguise my characters, which was comparatively easy, but leaving out the personal traits and giving the typical characteristics, which resulted in very many people suspecting me I had them in mind when I wrote my story. And I trans-

ferred the story from South Russia to the prairie plains of America, U. S. A. and Canada, if you please, without being too anxious to describe the locality in detail. Russian horse thieves I translated into American kidnappers and gangsters. Although I write preferably on Mennonite happenings, I never name the church, and try to write in a way that every Protestant could read the calendar with some benefit to him."

I disagree with the author on his change of Russian horse thieves to American gangsters, for I felt a dissonance here. The story would have been better with the thieves with whom Janzen undoubtedly has better acquaintance. American Mennonite community life plus the American gangster does not quite make sense; there is no real life connection. But Russian Mennonites and Russian horse thieves is something real in Mennonite experience. Janzen, however, has already caught the genius of the "new land," as is evidenced by the following poem translated from his *Durch Wind und Wellen* (*Through Wind and Waves*).

Canada

"Thou foreign land in dreams of night revealed,
In which my people build, and till the field,
Some secret in your somber mien lies hid,
So white in snow, so black in firs that pyramid."

Other Writings by Jacob H. Janzen

I. Published in Russia.

Denn meine Augen haben Deinen Heiland Gesehen (1914). (Published under the pen-name J. Zenian)
De Bildung (Low German).
Daut Schultebott (Low German).
De Enbildung (Low German).

II. Published in Canada.

Abraham (First Canadian publication, written in Russia about 1912).
Durch Wind Und Wellen (1928) $ .50.
Aus Meinem Leben (1929) $ .50.
Hausandachten (1929) $ .50.
Utwaundre (1931, Low German).
Das Sexuelle Problem (1942) $ .35.
Leben und Tod (1942) $ .35.
Erzahlungen aus der Mennonitischen Geschichte (1943) $1.00.
Handbuch für den Unterricht der Biblischen Geschichte in der Sonntagsschule (1944) $1.80.
Leitfaden für Biblische Geschichte (1944) $ .80.

(Prices are listed for titles in print which may be secured from the author, Waterloo, Ontario.)

Goshen College Jacob Sudermann.